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**DECONSTRUCTING WOODY ALLEN**  
Hollywood's most neurotic director talks about his new film

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Ballet stars search for life after the boards

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**WHEN FERGUSON FINISHED FIRST**  
Manchester United manager's winning debut

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Newspaper of the Year for photographic

# THE INDEPENDENT

Friday 17 April 1998 45p (50p) No 3,587

## Brown defies warnings of recession

By Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

GORDON Brown insisted yesterday that short-term pressures would not divert him from his long-term economic strategy, despite the news that export orders and sales for UK firms have fallen to a seven year low due to the strong pound.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, talking tough in Washington where he is attending an International Monetary Fund meeting, added for good measure that he would "lock in" strict spending plans.

A new survey published by the British Chambers of Commerce warned that manufacturing was a "hair's breadth away from recession. Export sales fell to their lowest since the depths of the last recession in the first quarter of this year.

Mr Brown acknowledged that the strong pound was of concern to exporters, but he said: "What would be an even greater worry would be any risk of a return to the kind of stop-go instability we saw in the 1980s and early 1990s."

The Government's policies had already delivered lower long-term interest rates, he said. "I believe the UK economy is in a position to establish, for the first time in decades, a virtuous circle of low inflation, high investment and a higher level of sustainable growth."

The Chancellor said the Government would also stay

tough on public expenditure, using the Comprehensive Spending Review as well as the recently-announced "code for fiscal stability".

"It is only if we manage to achieve spending discipline across the board, through the elimination of waste and a rigorous focus on our priorities, that we will be able to ensure investment in our key public services, particularly education and health," the Chancellor added.

The spending review is due to be completed by the summer. Critics of Mr Brown's tough line found new ammunition in the latest business survey from the chambers of commerce. It showed a decline in manufacturing and suggested a modest slowdown in services. But service sector firms said they were hiring more people.

Peter Lilley, the shadow Chancellor, said: "Gordon Brown claimed he would end the cycle of boom and bust. But he is the first Chancellor to give us both at once - manufacturing in recession while services rise over heating."

The chambers turned their fire-power on the Bank of England, whose Monetary Policy Committee has held interest rates unchanged but with a split vote since January. Ian Peters, deputy director general, said: "The Bank of England must now display a united front and make clear that interest rates have peaked."

It would only take one more

rate rise to topple manufacturing into recession, he warned.

Minutes of the committee's March meeting, published on Wednesday, showed that for the second month running Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England, had to use his casting vote to prevent an increase in borrowing costs.

Yesterday's survey had something for both sides of the interest rate debate. All the indicators for manufacturing took a turn for the worse between late 1997 and the first quarter of this year, and confidence fell to the lowest level since the last recession.

Export deliveries and orders also weakened in services, but still buoyant domestic demand raised planned employment and investment. Service businesses also continued to report a record level of difficulty in recruiting new staff, which will do nothing to allay concerns about pay pressures in the economy.

■ The Prime Minister's official spokesman said last night that Mr Brown would also be holding talks with the World Bank and the IMF, in the hope of underpinning the Northern Ireland peace settlement with increased investment. Mr Brown is expected to visit Ulster next month, to announce the details of a major economic package, which would provide added incentive for long-term domestic and overseas investment.

Exports under pressure, page 19

Engineering the world has seen his death at the age of 76 was prosaic. Dressed in baggy grey trousers and an off-white, short-sleeved cotton shirt his body was laid out in a simple but reeking of formaldehyde. Teenage Khmer Rouge soldiers, who resembled those who carried him to power for four bloody years, starting in 1975, guarded fully following a heart attack.

There was confusion at first over whether reports of his death were true. But it now seems clear that he died on Wednesday in a Cambodian village two miles from the border with Thailand. His body was shown to a group of journalists yesterday. They included the American reporter Nate Thayer, who has interviewed Pol Pot twice recently and is convinced that the dead man is the former dictator.

After causing havoc in his lifetime by plunging Cambodia into one of the most disastrous experiments in social

engineering the world has seen. His death at the age of 76 was prosaic.

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Before he died, they had been his captors. According to reports earlier in the week the rump of the Khmer Rouge had been planning to turn him over for international trial in a last attempt to save their own skins from advancing Cambodian government forces.

Pol Pot died deserted by his erstwhile comrades-in-arms in their last stronghold. Having inspired terror in Cambodia, he had become an entirely marginal figure. As if to emphasise the isolation facing the Khmer Rouge, the

only sound to be heard while Pol Pot lay at rest was the rumble of fighting between Khmer Rouge and government troops.

There is no suggestion of foul play in Pol Pot's death. Since he was arrested by his own troops last year he has been ill. The Cambodian government spokesman, Khieu Khamnu, said the state wanted to conduct a medical investigation but thought it unlikely that the former dictator had been killed.

Non Nou, the Khmer Rouge commander responsible for Pol Pot's security, said: "If they are afraid the body was tampered with, ask his wife. She was

it is unlikely that there will be much mourning for Pol Pot. Cambodia's King, Norodom Sihanouk, who twice allied himself with the Khmer Rouge, recently called him "one of the most horrible monsters ever created".

Photograph: AFP

The body of Pol Pot in a Cambodian village two miles from the Thai border. He suffered a heart attack on Wednesday

Known as "Brother Number One" during the years of his rule, Pol Pot may have been responsible for the deaths of one-fifth of Cambodia's population. Researchers believe as many as 1.7 million people died as a result of execution, torture and mass starvation.

Pol Pot received his higher education in France and acquired a reputation there as an amiable, fun-loving student. It was in France that he also became acquainted with Marxism and back in his homeland he built up the revolutionary movement which overthrew Lon Nol's regime in 1975.

The movement he helped to create is now largely decimated. It helped create the current government led by Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge commander who is also a stranger to using violence for political ends.

Rupert Cornwell, page 17  
Obituary, page 18

## British firms gave US politicians £3m

By Fran Abrams and  
Chris Brown

political action committees", or PACs, set up by the firms.

Three-quarters of the money - £4.3m in 1995 and 1996 - went to the Republicans, though most firms also made donations to the Democrats.

Among the British-owned companies which put money into political campaigns were Brown and Williams Tobacco, a subsidiary of British American Tobacco, which gave \$1.022m (£680,000) and Glaxo Wellcome, the pharmaceuticals firm, which gave \$221,454 (£16,000).

Others included two more pharmaceutical outfits, Zeneca, which gave \$325,247 (£216,000) and Smithkline Beecham, which gave \$264,950 (£176,000).

The issue was highlighted at yesterday's hearing of the inquiry into political funding.

Some were made voluntarily by employees through "po-

promised not to make political donations in this country had made them in the US.

"If they have got operations in the US then I have no problem with the donations," he said. "But many multi-nationals say they make no political donations while giving money in America."

A recent study by a Washington-based group, the Center for Responsive Politics, examined records to show the total giving from non-American companies in the run up to the November 1996 federal elections. The companies' contributions are legal as long as they are made by their US arm and no foreign nationals are involved in the decision to donate.

The biggest donor was the Canadian Seagram Company, at

Rupert Murdoch's Australian NewsCorp which gave \$921,454 (£614,000) and Glaxo Wellcome,

A spokesman for BAT said the figures held by the company did not correspond exactly with those given, though its subsidiaries had PACs which distributed voluntary payments from employees.

Chris Major, a spokesman for Zeneca, said all the company's donations compiled with US regulations. The firm's own figures showed it gave \$191,000 in 1996, including payments from its PAC, he added. Corporate giving was standard practice in the US. "It ... facilitates access to legislators. In the States there is a special interest democracy which insists on active involvement in the political process," he said.

### Today's news

#### Milkman charged over flood death

A milkman whose 14-year-old passenger drowned when their van was swept away in floods was yesterday charged with causing death by dangerous driving.

Warwickshire Police said Vincent Gallagher, 34, from the Stoke area of Coventry in the West Midlands, was bailed to appear before magistrates next month.

Carl Giles, also from the Stoke area of the city, died when the van was swept into the River Leam in Evesham, Warwickshire on Friday. A police search was launched and the teenager's body was discovered on Saturday under a bridge. Mr Gallagher was dragged from the water by a police officer who tied ropes around his waist and waded into the torrential water.

**Peace move**  
Ulster Unionist Party leader David Trimble moved to break opposition from within his own ranks to the Northern Ireland Agreement.

Page 2

#### Cancers missed

Breast screening of women in Humberstone failed to detect cancers in 17 women because an outdated mammography machine was producing poor quality X-rays.

Page 3

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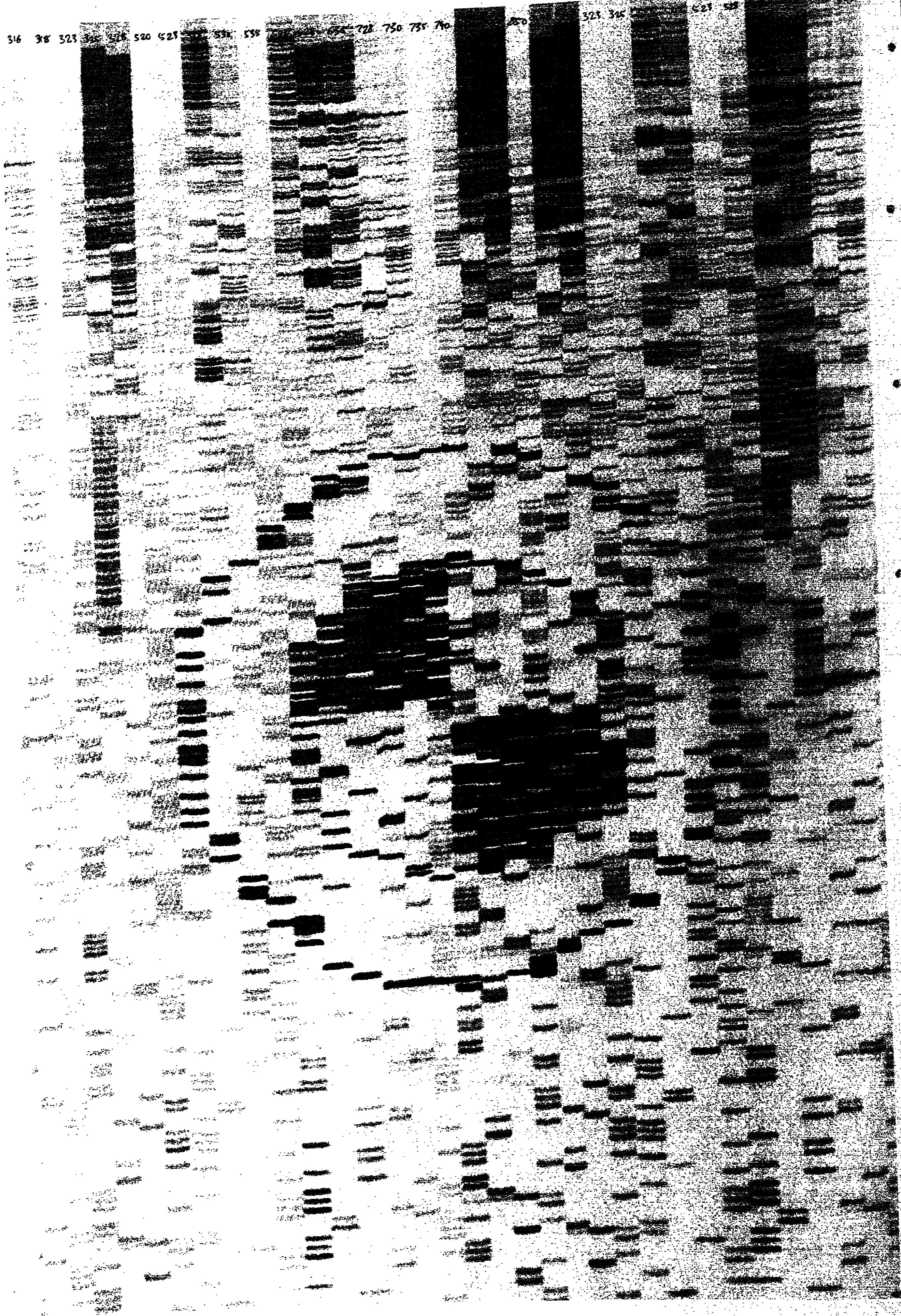
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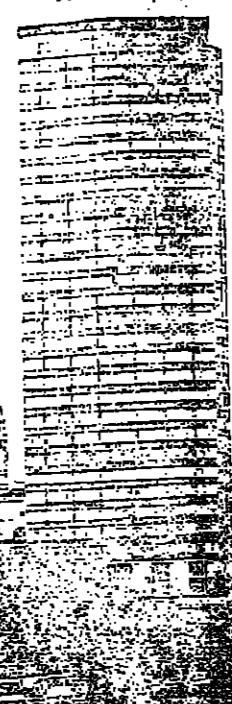


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'Monstrous': The Millbank tower. Photograph: Andrew Buurman

## 'Ugly' buildings should be destroyed, says MP

By Andrew Buncombe

APPARENTLY unconcerned that he might be committing treason, a Labour MP yesterday cited Buckingham Palace as one of Britain's "ugly, grey" buildings that should be razed and replaced for the Millennium.

Barry Sheerman, MP for Huddersfield, suggested that removal of Buckingham Palace would present the Royal Family with no problems as to where to live. "I would suggest that it

for knocking down. In London he cited Battersea power station, the Millbank tower and the Department of the Environment's offices in Westminster. He also mentioned others around the country, including the Bull Ring in Birmingham.

Mr Sheerman said that the removal of Buckingham Palace would present the Royal Family with no problems as to where to live. "I would suggest that it

is ripe for removal."

Launching his Millennium

Destruction Challenge, he said:

"Each of us knows of an archi-

tical monstrosity which rich-

ly deserves to be eliminated.

The Millennium is a perfect pro-

ject for a fresh start."

Mr Sheerman, chairman of the

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scores of buildings that were ripe

for knocking down. In London he cited Battersea power station, the Millbank tower and the Department of the Environment's offices in Westminster.

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# The painting that comes with sex thrown in



Painted lady: Angela Marshall displaying the setting for 'Fuckart and Pimp' in Bermondsey, south London

Photograph: David Rose

By Kate Watson-Smyth

A STAINED mattress lies at one end of a dingy gallery. The room is lit by the glow from a single red light bulb and by the bed stand an easel and a simple wooden chair.

This is the setting for Angela Marshall's "Fuckart and Pimp" exhibition which is due to open in Bermondsey, south London, today.

It is on this dirty mattress that she is planning to "consummate" her art with the person who buys the painting. Resplendent in a leopard-print dress with a Wonderbra and a large red hat, Ms Marshall said she was unconcerned by those who wished to moralise about what she was doing.

"This is real living art and I can do it any way I want to. If it starts people thinking about art and prostitution and sex then that is a good thing. They need to look into themselves and find out why they have a problem with what I am doing," she declared.

"Fuckart" is her first show but Ms Marshall has been selling her paintings for sex for the last two years. "I lived in Hollywood for a while and I found that it really screwed me up - the whole seediness of the place and their attitude to sex and human relationships. So I just stopped having sex for a couple of years.

"Then I met this man and decided that I wanted him to have my painting and I wanted it to be more than that. I wanted him to pay for the painting and I wanted him to have sex with me. I felt totally empowered by it because I was in control and selling the painting was like selling a piece of me anyway. So I decided that I wanted

to do it again and since then I have sold all my paintings in that way."

She says that sex is meaningless.

"It's about an interaction between

the person and the art and that is an important part of my work."

However, for several days it ap-

peared that her work did not exist

and that Ms Marshall herself was a

figment of someone's imagination.

Dreamt up by the Decima gallery

to gain some publicity. For several

days it was impossible to organise a

time to interview Ms Marshall. She

was always too busy, too tired. But

This is real living  
art and I can do it  
any way I want to ...  
sex is meaningless

Finally it was agreed that she would pose for photographs in Newcastle where she was "doing some work for the university".

I have never done any work in

this country before and I need to find out what is socially acceptable here,"

she said in a telephone interview. "It is about prostitution of the art and the artist. I will meet the people first and find out if they are attractive to me and if I can form a relationship with them. I don't mind having sex with them - it is all for the sake of the art."

Somehow it seemed hardly sur-

prising to discover that this "Ms Mar-

shall" was an imposter. Her real

name was Raine Lawson and she

owned a coffee shop in Newcastle.

Three weeks previously she had

been pictured in a Sunday newspaper, claiming to have seen Douglas

Hall, the Newcastle United director

using drugs. When confronted, the

gallery apologised and promised to

produce the real Ms Marshall.

And sure enough, a couple of

hours later she appeared. Bursting

into the room, she complained of ex-

haustion before flinging herself

down on a chair and demolishing a

sandwich.

"I am the real Angela Marshall,"

she announced. "And I am doing this

exhibition and it is about finding out

about my sexuality and seeing what

I will learn from this experience."

She did not seem to mind that Ms

Lawson had impersonated her.

"Worse things can happen," she

said. However, she was less im-

pressed by what Ms Lawson had said

in the name of her art.

"She said that," she gasped in-

credulously. "Now I'm getting real-

ly pissy. That's not what it's about at

the university".

Back in Newcastle, Ms Lawson

was unrepentant. "I was told that

Angela did not want to do interviews

and so I agreed to pose as her. It was

easy. I just said the kind of things I

knew she would say." Ms Lawson said

with a flick of her gloved hand.

"I am just here to do my show and

that is what I am concentrating on,"

she said.

## Museum urged to reveal grisly secrets

By Simon Tait

THE NATURAL History Museum is under pressure from academics to reveal its records of Aboriginal human remains, some of them obtained in macabre circumstances. But the museum is resisting, apparently because the archives are in a mess.

During the last century there was a lucrative trade in parts of bodies and sometimes whole bodies, particularly of Australian Aborigines which were of particular interest for scientists working on theories about racial development.

Stories of dead Aborigines being snatched from battle sites, of heads being swapped in morguaries and bodies being disinterred and stripped of flesh at dead of night sound more like the story line from a Tom Sharpe novel than serious scientific research. A complete skeleton could change hands for £150 in 1870s.

The stolen head of William Lanne, "the last Tasmanian", is believed to have been smuggled on board a London bound ship sewn into a seal's carcass, but

the stench was so overpowering the whole lot was pitched overboard.

Peter Stone, of the World Archaeological Congress, described the NHM's reluctance to allow access as bizarre. "We are an organisation devoted to the wider knowledge and understanding of archaeology, but you can't discuss points relating to the global expansion of mankind until you know what's in the biggest collection of remains and who is controlling it," he said.

Last week the WAC repeated its request on behalf of an Aboriginal research group to see the list, and it has the support of the Australian High Commission, but the museum says researchers would find little of use in it.

The specimens came to us from other British institutions with documentation in very variable condition, and some archives are very muddled and are even contradictory," said Robin Cocks, the museum's head of palaeontology. "Some specimens have no more than the name of the province in which they were found."

Neil Chalmers, the museum's director, said: "We do give access to bona fide researchers and we would consider giving further access depending on the merits of the research on a case by case basis. We have to be conscious of the sensitivities of the indigenous people."

Mr Stone believes that the museum might simply be too embarrassed about the state of the archive to let academics see it. "It is a crazy attitude, and if archaeologists familiar with the subject had access and could bring their own knowledge to bear, they could be of enormous help in making sense of the archive," he said.

## Clapton song 'promotes violence'

A NEW Eric Clapton song in which he imagines murdering a lover has sparked a row in the UK and in America.

American women's groups have protested to Clapton's record company WEA about "Sick and Tired" in which the veteran hero wonders whether he should blow a woman's brains out, singing: "Then you won't bother me no more."

American women's shelter group Peace at Home and the Anti-Defamation League in Boston have reacted with outrage to the song. Anti-Defamation League director Leonard Zakin has asked Clapton to change the lyrics and donate a portion of the album's proceeds to violence prevention programmes.

But his American spokeswoman, Ronnie Lippin, said the song's lyrics fitted the blues genre. In Britain, Rights of Women vice-coordinator Chanda Mulenga said: "If it is a situation where someone is promoting violence, then it is very distasteful."

Refugee organiser Clare Phillipson, of Wearside Women in Need, said: "It is offensive and insensitive. It is too real and too raw for people."

"We have had to work with children whose mothers have been killed by men because they have been sick and tired of women. I disapprove strongly of lyrics like that. It is upholding the level of violence that unfortunately permeates a lot of relationships between men and women."

The track appears on *Piggin* which is currently at number 14 in the British charts.

## Failure of faith healers let US children die

By Jeremy Lawrence  
Health Editor

SCORES of children taken to faith healers in the United States by parents who abhorred orthodox medicine have died despite suffering from conditions which were treatable.

The darker side of spiritual healing, which is attracting a growing following in Britain - especially among celebrity footballers such as Glen Hoddle, the England manager, Ian Wright, the Arsenal striker and Les Ferdinand of Spurs - is revealed in a survey of sceptics in America by doctors from the South West Children's Hospital in Texas, published in the medical journal *Pediatrics*. From 1975 to 1995, they found that 172 children had died, all but three of whom would have benefited from medical intervention. In 140 of the cases the children suffered from conditions with a greater than 90 per cent chance of recovery with medical care.

The findings come in the wake of a study devised by a nine-year-old girl and reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, which debunked claims by practitioners of the healing technique known as "therapeutic touch" to be able to detect and manipulate the "human energy field".

There are more than 10,000 healers in the United Kingdom, the largest single grouping in alternative medicine. Ken Wyatt, director of the UK National Federation of Spiritual Healers, which has 6,500 members, said: "We would never advise anyone to have healing in preference to a visit to their doctor ... We see our role as complementary to the medical profession. There is evidence that people will mend faster if they have healing as well as conventional treatment."

# News

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# Keep gifts secret, says Tory donor

By Fran Abrams  
Political Correspondent

POLITICAL donations should be kept secret no matter how big they are, a major donor to the Tory party said yesterday.

Sir Stanley Kalms, who was knighted in John Major's last New Year's honours, told the Neill inquiry into political funding that it was up to politicians to keep politics clean, not donors.

He also hinted that Tony Blair might have been compromised by the Bernie Ecclestone affair, in which the £1m Labour donor met the Prime Minister to plead that Formula One be exempt from a tobacco sponsorship ban.

As chairman of Dixons, Sir Stanley presided over donations totalling £100,000 between 1993 and 1997, though the company has now stopped its payments. He has also made personal donations.

"It's a private decision made with tax-paid money and I ought to have the right to distribute that money without any public disclosure," he said.

Corporate donations were on

the wane, though, he said, and he had been persuaded by the argument that not all Dixons' shareholders would want their money to go to political causes. "I was comfortable supporting the Conservative Party but times move on," he said.

Asked if the Prime Minister had

been compromised by Bernie Ecclestone's donation, he said: "I would admit that *prima facie* there is a certain discomfort about this particular example.

"The moment you cross that border and go to see a minister on a specific rather than a general [matter], you break every rule of the game. Ministers must have their own standards."

Later in the session, a Labour MP warned that donations like the one given by Bernie Ecclestone could have a corrupting effect on politics. Martin Linton, MP for Battersea, suggested the state should give "aid in kind" to political parties through tax credits on donations of less than £1,000 and through free access to advertising space and hoardings.

Without such aid there would be either a "slum democracy" in which parties were underfunded, or do-

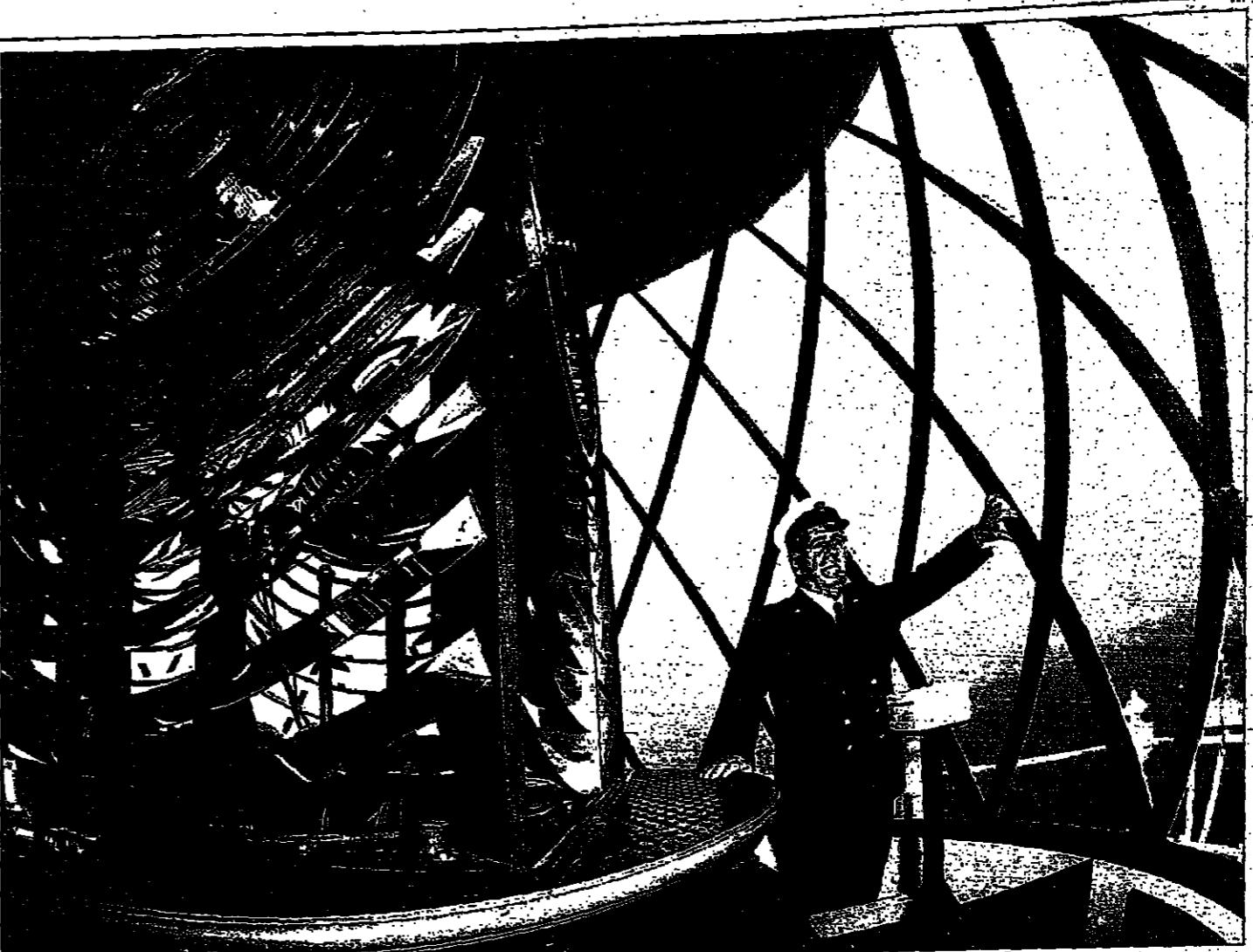
nations would play too large a part. "The alternative is a sleaze democracy, where the parties are forced into an unhealthy reliance on funding from private individuals which will sooner or later compromise their integrity, for example Asil Nadir, John Latsis or Bernie Ecclestone," he said.

"The danger is not that there will be corrupt deals behind closed doors. It is that parties will feel beholden to their major donors, nervous of offending them, anxious not to jeopardise the possibility of another large donation."

The committee is still waiting to hear from Mr Ecclestone whether he is prepared to come before them and give evidence.

Ministers have strongly denied that the donation influenced their decision last year to exempt Formula 1 from the ban on tobacco advertising. However, Lord Neill's advice, they handed back the money when the payment became public.

Andrew Puddephatt, director of Charter 88, told the committee that there should be spending limits at elections, and there should also be direct state aid for parties.



In the programme: Eddie Matthews, aged 59 and for 42 years a lighthouse keeper, passing the Lizard Light in Cornwall to computer control. Lizard was the last light in the South-west to be automated; there are only three staffed beacons in Britain. Photograph: Sam Morgan Moore

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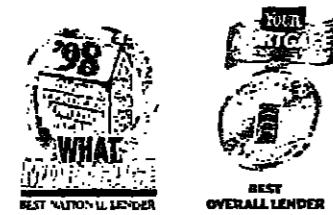
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## Lord Irvine aide to quit

By Fran Abrams

A SENIOR aide to Lord Irvine is to leave his office and seek work in the private sector, it was announced last night.

Sheila Thompson, head of information in the Lord Chancellor's Department, has been in her post for seven and a half years and has worked closely with Lord Irvine's predecessor, Lord Mackay of Clashfern.

She is the latest in a series of senior press officers to leave the Government Information Service since the general election. Jonathan Haslam, former press secretary to John Major, left the Department for Education and Employment last October to take up a job in the City. Jean Caines, head of information at the Department of Trade and Industry, took early retirement. The heads of information at the Northern Ireland and Scottish offices, the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Social Security and the Treasury have also left.

Whitehall sources said last night that Ms Thompson, a highly-regarded civil servant, had been expected by her new boss to fend off bad publicity in the manner of a political special adviser.

Before the announcement was made it had already become known that Allan Percival, deputy press secretary at No 10, was to move to Lord Irvine's department in an attempt to boost his popularity.

The Lord Chancellor has been at the centre of bad publicity about the £650,000 refurbishment of his official apartments in the House of Lords, his views on privacy rules and his comparison of himself with Henry VIII's all-powerful Lord Chancellor, Lord Wolsey.

"After seven-and-a-half years at the Lord Chancellor's Department, it's time for a change," said Ms Thompson, who is 47.

"When I arrived at the Lord Chancellor's Department, the criminal justice system was completely new territory for me. I set out to make it more clearly understood and the workings of the judges more clearly understood. I wish Allan Percival every success in the new expanded role."

Ms Thompson broke new ground by encouraging the judiciary to "help explain their more controversial rulings through the media".

## Blair's Middle East tour avoids conflict

By Anthony Bevins  
Political Editor

THE lesson of the Northern Ireland peace process was that even the most intractable problems could be solved, the Prime Minister's official spokesman said yesterday, on the eve of Tony Blair's four-day visit to the Middle East.

The tour has been stripped of all potential controversy, with no overnight stay in Gaza, and no visit to East Jerusalem, but Mr Blair's spokesman was scathing about the "ill-informed comment" about the arrangements for the visit.

The spokesman also confirmed, for the first time officially, that Mr Blair would raise the question of the two British nurses, jailed for the murder of an Australian colleague, Yvonne Gilford, in 1996. There has been speculation that the visit could be used to announce an early release for Deborah Parry and Lucille McLaughlin.

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(centre spread, tabloid section.)

# Blunkett acts to halt school boycotts

By Ben Russell  
Education Correspondent

DAVID BLUNKETT, Secretary of State for Education, offered an olive branch to teachers yesterday in an attempt to avert a summer of industrial strife in schools.

He offered emergency talks with union leaders next week to cut classroom red tape in time to stave off a boycott of school bureaucracy which threatens to disrupt thousands of schools from next month.

Mr Blunkett said he hoped his action would eliminate the need for industrial action by 400,000 teachers.

He told members of the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers in Scarborough he was willing to send guidance to all schools instructing heads how to cut out excess paperwork.

Nigel de Gruchy, NASUWT general secretary, said he hoped the move would avert the industrial action, which could mean teachers boycotting meetings and refusing to write lengthy reports. The proposed action threatens to disrupt the Government's plan to set literacy and numeracy targets for every school.

Mr Blunkett said he wanted "a common-sense solution to find the answers to a genuine problem". He added: "We will circulate to every school in the country what is not expected, what can be achieved and how we can work together. We need to be able to respond so that people do not need to produce a report every fortnight on how the targets are being achieved, so that we do not have people who find that in doing their job

## TUC names bad bosses

By Barrie Clement  
Labour Editor

THE TRADES Union Congress yesterday "named and shamed" 10 employers - from household names to small family firms - which are allegedly denying workers their rights.

Abandoning caution ahead of the publication of a White Paper on "Fairness at Work", the TUC published a hit list of companies at which it levels a range of allegations from a refusal to allow union officials on their premises to intimidation.

Unions say they will target the employers as soon as the Government's proposals for a law on union recognition emerge in the White Paper, due out within the next month.

At the top of the list in the TUC's "Fairness not Fear" dossier is Co-Steel of Sheerness and one of its main contractors MultiServ. Co-Steel is accused of threatening employees and undermining health and safety. Management would only say yesterday: "We are one of the best companies for employee relations, not one of the worst."

Allied Domecq, which owns 4,000 pubs across Britain, al-

legedly imposed "disgraceful" conditions on managers who are only allowed up to three days' paid leave if a spouse dies.

The Midland Bank has been targeted, because of its withdrawal of union recognition for managers, and Kruger Tissues of Caernarfon was accused of dismissing an employee for taking too much time off following the death of his wife and baby.

Newspoint, a local newspaper owner, has derecognised the National Union of Journalists. It has been derecognised. The group said that 70 per cent of employees owned shares in the company.

Union rights have also been denied at Sebco Bakery, part of the British Bakeries group. Another firm, Meltop, a machine engineering company based near Leeds, denied there were serious health and safety concerns at the plant; Relyon Bedding, of Wellington near Taunton, is accused of forcing employees to work harder for less money. More than half the workers at Sanders Coaches of Holt, Norfolk, were said to be members of the Transport and General Workers' Union, but recognition was refused.

## CJD sufferers 'need more support'

A CONFERENCE on Creutzfeld Jakob Disease yesterday heard repeated calls for more to be done to help sufferers and their families.

Experts said medical staff often did not know how to approach the degenerative illness.

Delays in diagnosis can add to the trauma and even after CJD is suspected many families struggle to get help from cash-strapped social services departments, the specialists told the conference.

The conference, at Warwick University, was organised by the CJD Support Network. It

has been working with social services chiefs to prepare national guidelines to ensure help is available.

"At the moment it depends on where you live," said conference organiser Clive Evers.

The network is also hoping to introduce guidelines for GPs later this year.

"There is a difficulty in diagnosis and this disease has got to be treated immediately," said Gil Turner, a support worker. "Assessment procedures can take three to six months and some of our patients are dead in that time."



Life of a megastar: The three ages of Dame Edna - represented by Lucy Hayden, Penelope Woodman and the Dame herself - in the preview of New Edna: The Spectacle at the Theatre Royal Haymarket, in London. The show opens on 21 April

Photograph: Geraint Lewis



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# Teething troubles end with a filling finale



STEPHEN GOODWIN  
*Everest Diary*

Base Camp

THE blues and oranges of tents spread over the rubble heap of Base Camp looked almost homely as we descended from the Khumbu icefall. After several hours winding beneath impeding ice cliffs and treading warily over aluminium ladders bridging crevasses dropping all the way to Hades the relief that you're through is considerable.

We have just returned from two nights at Camp One, which is situated above the icefall at over 6,000m. If our Himalayan Kingdoms Expeditions' Ever-

est expedition goes to plan, we will make another acclimatisation trip in four or five days' time, this time to Camp Two at the head of the Western Cwm or perhaps higher, and then the summit bid in three or four weeks.

So that makes another four runs through the icefall, one of the most dangerous stretches in climbing Everest from the Nepal side. Lord Hunt, leader of the first successful ascent, summed it up well when he wrote: "An icefall is a frozen cascade of ice. The Khumbu icefall is indeed a monster of the species."

Climbing through it - often clipped to fixed lines, for not many feet pass before you are stepping or jumping over some deep slit - one can become lost in awe at the beauty of the massive ice sculptures. But when suddenly you pass into cold shadow you look up and see a great blue bulge hanging at an

impossible angle, you understand why the place has been

a Sherpa widow-maker.

Despite the thin air you hurry on. I certainly hurried in places, and pulled hard on the jumar to climb a couple of ice

cliffs - a jumar is a device carried by every Everest climber: it will slide up a rope but not slip back. So by the time I reached the lip of the icefall and began the walk to our tents at the opening to the Western

Cwm every step was a weary effort. How will I manage at higher altitude?

But even so my five hours from Base Camp was bettered in our team only by the super-fit Canadian, Byron Smith,

and familiarity will make it

quicker next time.

Next morning we walked far

enough into the Western Cwm to get a good view of Everest's awesome south-west face. For

all the photographs I've seen of

this aspect, first climbed in

1975 by a strong team under

Chris Bonington, it was still a

surprise to see so much stark

dark rock and so little snow.

The cwm itself was named

by the ill-fated George Mallory.



Step by step: Winding through the Khumbu icefall, you see crevasses dropping all the way to Hades

on the 1921 British reconnaissance expedition. Cwm is a Welsh word for a high, dead-end valley. Mallory must have thought it was a cwm par excellence, with Everest on the north side. Lhotse, another 8,000m peak, at its head, and Nuptse, just under the magic figure, on the south side. As we watched, small avalanches were constantly cascading from the slopes. In 1921 it was believed the icefall was an insurmountable barrier.

However, for two members of our team - the stockbroker Rob Owen and our doctor Sundeep Dhillon - the day was to be more than one of mountain reverence. One of the more painful perils of high-altitude climbing is a bad tooth. A major side filling that Rob had had done in Japan was just not up to the Himalayas and popped out, leaving Sundeep with a challenge - only his third ever shot at dentistry, and at 6,000m in snow and with only a rudimentary kit.

Watched by the rest of us, Sundeep performed with aplomb, momentary doubts about whether the filler would set vanished after five minutes when it turned to rock, with Rob as relieved as if he had just survived another round with the icefall.

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- Audio or vibrating alerts
- Built-in clock/alarm
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The Link

## Blair ventures on the Net with No 10 web site

By Charles Arthur  
Science and Technology Editor

TONY BLAIR yesterday announced the arrival of the information revolution, unveiling a web site on the Internet for No 10 Downing Street and insisting that "it is vital that Britain leads the way so that we can be Europe's pioneer in what is now known as the information age".

There was no evidence of irony from the man who admitted in an article for Rupert Murdoch's Sun newspaper that he wrote all his speeches in longhand, and that his skills with a computer lagged behind his colleagues' because he "very rarely" used one.

Launching the web site on a visit to a library in Croydon, south London, he said it "highlights the tremendous potential of information technology for bridging the gap between government and the people".

Potential yes, but reality may be delayed. The site, at <http://www.number-10.gov.uk>, offers an object lesson in bad web page design. It is utterly reliant on graphics - so for the normal Internet user with a telephone connection it is much more time-consuming and expensive to read. More experienced designers always offer readers the chance to read pages in text form.

Nor was there any apparent embarrassment that it has taken almost four years for Britain's leader to catch up with the United States government ([www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov) has been running since October 1994), nor at the fact that the Prime Minister's much-touted "cyberspace grilling" by members of the public will in fact lack even the spon-

nor.

At yesterday's launch, Mr Blair said that "it is vital that political leaders try to keep in touch with the people that elected them". However, that may be easier said than done.

Yesterday attempts by *The Independent* to access the Downing Street site's "open



Photograph: Nicola Kurtz

languor of Prime Minister's Questions in Parliament, where members can ask follow-up questions.

Instead of responding interactively to questions posed on-line, Mr Blair will deal only with those sent in four days before the 29 April interview. Even those will first be vetted by Sir David Frost before being put to Mr Blair.

Sir David said he liked the idea of the first prime ministerial interview on the Net. "It will be a first for me as well. The public will be in sole charge of devising the questions, and I will be in sole charge of deciding which ones to put to the Prime Minister," he said.

At yesterday's launch, Mr Blair said that "it is vital that political leaders try to keep in touch with the people that elected them". However, that may be easier said than done. Yesterday attempts by *The Independent* to access the Downing Street site's "open

discussion" area ended in failure. The server appears to be not available.

■ Black people in the US are less than half as likely to have a computer or access to the Internet than white people, even after allowing for differences in income and education, according to a new scientific study published today.

Writing in *Science* magazine, Donna Hoffman and Tom Novak of Vanderbilt University said: "If a significant segment of our society is denied equal access to the Internet, US firms will lack the technological skills needed to remain competitive. Employment opportunities and income differences among whites and African Americans may be exacerbated, with further negative consequences to the nation's cities."

Their study found that while 73 percent of white students owned a home computer, only 32 percent of black students did.

## Laptop computer deal puts teachers in information age

By Ben Russell,  
Education Correspondent

MORE than 9,000 teachers will have access to laptop computers under a £23m package announced yesterday by David Blunkett, Secretary of State for Education.

The move is designed to put teachers - many of whom have been shown in surveys to know less about information technology than their pupils - in the "anguard of the information age", according to Mr Blunkett.

"They need to be able to inspire young people and show that they too can use IT," he said. He added that he wanted teaching staff to become familiar with the latest multimedia technology.

He told the conference of the National Association of Schoolmasters' Union of Women Teachers in Scarborough that teachers should take advantage of lesson plans and other voluntary guidance which the government is making available on the Internet.

Mr Blunkett said some 4,000 schools would benefit from £257m in government cash plus another £250m as a result of public/private partnerships.

He said giving portable computers "helps their confidence and their teaching and helps them to organise their work so as to use more effectively the time they spend with their pupils".

But Nigel de Gruchy, general secretary of the NASUWT, said: "We would rather have money in classroom teachers' pockets than sitting on head-teachers' laps."

# Berlusconi loses his grin as power slips away

By Anne Hanley  
in Rome

IT SHOULD have been a crowning moment. Four years after creating a mainstream political party from scratch in weeks, and leading that party to an election victory, Silvio Berlusconi climbed onto a stage decked out in Forza Italia blue, the notes of the Forza Italia anthem dying away, to address his Forza Italia party.

"Our critics call Forza Italia the party that doesn't exist," said Mr Berlusconi. "Suddenly, and inconceivably, however, here we are. It exists, it keeps going, and it is growing."

But upbeat as the media tycoon-turned-politico was, nothing could hide the tension behind what is the first, and may be the last, national congress held by the political brainchild of one of Italy's most successful entrepreneurs.

"He's a loose cannon," said Forza Italia founding member Tiziana Parenti as she stormed out of the party one day before the congress. "It's a virtual party, a party of yes-men, a Kafka-esque castle."

Ms Parenti, a former magistrate, is not the only key personality to have left Forza Italia over the past few weeks. Intellectuals and Euro-MPs, former generals and journalists have deserted what looks increasingly like a sinking ship, irked, not so much by Mr Berlusconi's high-handed managerial attitude as by his habit of making contradictory decisions in rapid succession.

The latest example was his renege – in an interview in one of the many magazines he owns – on an all-party groundplan to introduce a French-style presidential republic in Italy. This

week he opted for a German system. Moreover, he mooted bringing back a proportional voting system to replace the first-past-the-post system which he has always championed.

To the congress, Mr Berlusconi explained that all he wanted to do was open the topic of reform up to debate, giving party members an opportunity to mull over alternatives – this after a parliamentary committee of which he was a vocal member spent two years deciding on the best recipe.

For the other parties which make up the centre-right Freedoms Front coalition, also headed by Mr Berlusconi, the change of heart came as the latest in a series of blows struck by their unpredictable friend. When Gianni Fini, leader of the National Alliance party and Mr Berlusconi's closest political ally, walked into the Forza Italia congress yesterday, he was not smiling.

Since his triumphal entrance into politics in 1994, Mr Berlusconi's trademark grin has turned into a grimace. Gone are the days of the *milionari riders*, the laughing billionaires, with his sweeping utopian visions of the kind so familiar to devotees of the afternoon soaps with which his three national television channels abound; at the beginning of his political adventure Mr Berlusconi had no qualms about promising to safeguard "a free society... where there is no fear, where generosity, dedication, solidarity and love of work take the place of social envy and class hatred".

Above all, he pinpointed the former Communist Party – now the leading element in the Prime Minister Romano Prodi's coalition government – as his, and Italy's, worst enemy. a

deadly threat to free enterprise. The market economy had allowed Mr Berlusconi to accumulate a television empire, the country's largest publishing house, a huge construction firm and the AC Milan football team. Left-wingers in power, it implied, would prevent other honest, hard-working Italians from reaching these heights.

A public exhausted by corruption enquiries and generations of dodgy politicians lapped it up. Berlusconi had not yet had a chance to display his own political ineptitude.

Through an ill-fated seven-month period in government in 1994, and a hard-knocks experience in opposition since, Mr Berlusconi has lowered his sights. Keeping the Reds in check remains a driving ambition – long after Italy's Communist Party threw off its last vestiges of Marxism. But keeping himself out of the law courts is also a priority, as is clinging on by his fingernails to his hold over the opposition leadership.

He may, however, be shoot-

ing himself in the foot in his rush to achieve them. By evoking a return to a proportional system, Mr Berlusconi was pandering to the Northern League, the devolution-seeking party which was briefly allied with Forza Italia but only long enough to knock the Berlusconi government out of power in December 1994 in an unedifying display of power-play.

Mr Berlusconi's memory for such humiliations is obviously short. Not so Mr Fini's. Moreover, Mr Fini is not budging from his demands in the constitutional reform field. And these include a French-style presidential system.

If Mr Berlusconi hopes the Northern League's visceral loathing of the Milan magnates who are digging into the shadier side of his business interests will ensure he retains his parliamentary immunity he is mistaken. By dealing a death blow to his crumbling opposition, he may find himself out of the political world altogether, and well within reach of the law.

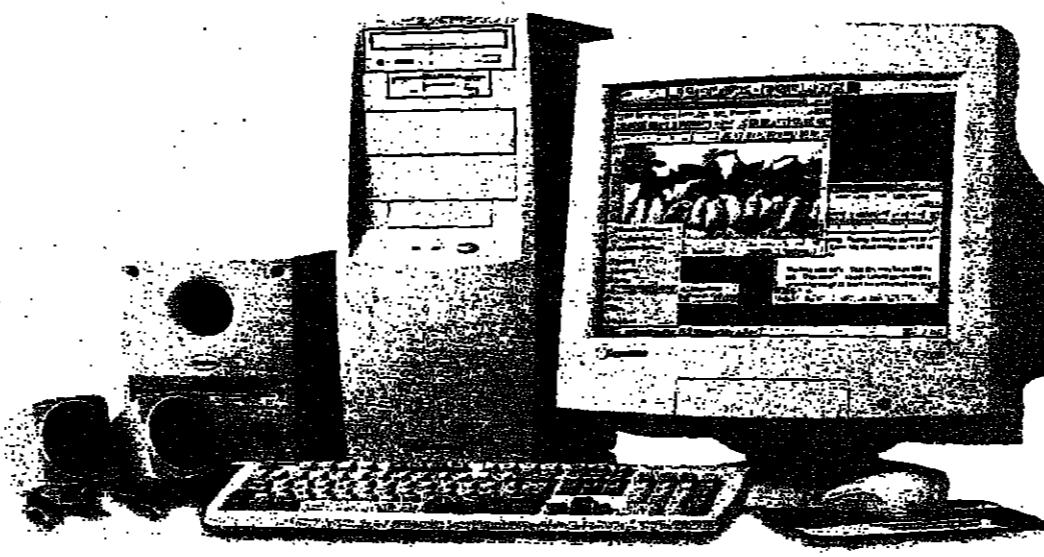


One hit wonder: Berlusconi is showing the strain as Forza Italia hits the ropes

Photograph: Andras Banfai/Reuters

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# Paula Jones set to appeal sex-case ruling

By Mary Dejevsky  
in Washington

PAULA JONES was expected to break two weeks' silence yesterday to announce that she was pursuing her sexual harassment case against President Bill Clinton to appeal, in spite of pessimistic legal assessments of her chances. Her appeal will be backed by the right-wing Rutherford Institute, which funded her original case.

Ms Jones's civil lawsuit against Mr Clinton was dismissed on 1 April by an Arkansas judge who ruled that she had no case against the President, even if her accusations were true. According to Ms Jones, Mr Clinton had invited her to a hotel room, dropped his trousers and asked her to perform oral sex; she refused.

After lengthy pre-trial hearings, Judge Susan Webber Wright decided Mr Clinton's alleged behaviour,

while "boorish and offensive", was not sufficient to support a claim for sexual harassment and that Ms Jones had suffered no psychological or professional damage. Mr Clinton was governor of Arkansas at the time of the alleged incident eight years ago and she was a state employee.

Ms Jones was said to have been shocked and distraught by the dismissal of the case, which had been

due to come to court on 27 May. Among the factors believed to have been considered by Ms Jones and her legal team were the record of the court circuit that would hear an appeal (the eighth circuit, based in St Louis), and the political impression that would be created if she abandoned her case. Mr Clinton's supporters have argued that her motive in bringing the case was largely political and that she was being used

by right-wingers who wanted to discredit a Democratic president.

Ms Jones's lawyers are expected to argue that many of the facts that emerged during the pre-trial investigation were disputed and, as such, should have been presented to a jury rather than being dismissed outright by the judge. Ms Webber Wright's ruling, however, was widely praised in legal circles for its clarity and incisiveness, and the odds on its being

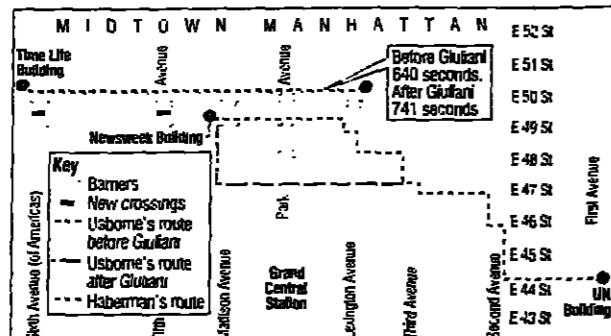
overturned were judged slim. Even if Ms Jones is granted leave to appeal the case will not have the political drama of the original lawsuit. It will focus on legal technicalities, and proceedings could drag on beyond the end of Mr Clinton's presidency two and a half years hence.

Meanwhile in Washington, the independent prosecutor, Kenneth Starr, who is investigating charges of criminal wrongdoing by Mr Clinton

**N**OW I find vindication in Clyde Haberman's regular NYC column in today's Metro Section of the New York Times. Just look at this: Some "expert", who is possibly even more barmy than I, has ascertained that thanks to the barriers and, if you please, two new pedestrian crossings instituted by the mayor in the middle of the 49-50th St blocks on Fifth Avenue and Sixth - yes, the middle - it now takes 101 seconds longer to make a journey from the north-west corner of 50th and Sixth to the north-east corner of 50th and Lexington. That is 741 seconds compared with 640 seconds - or 16 per cent longer. And for what? If the car drivers are happier I have not exactly heard them tooting their horns for Rudy.

**I**f you are still trying to digest the notion of pedestrian crossings mid-block, you are not alone. This is not just not meant to be in Manhattan. As Mr Haberman notes, "The face of some of Manhattan's most famous intersections - a part of town that is New York to much of the world - has now been dramatically altered." I was forced onto the 5th Ave mid-block on my way yesterday to the Rockefeller Center. I had one mission. Had winter indeed ended in New York, and could summer formally be declared begun? The answer is no, at least not until this Sunday. That is when the Rockefeller Ice Rink, with the gilded statue of Prometheus watching over it, will at last close for the season. From then until next October, the rink will be home to cafe tables, umbrellas and palms in huge garden boxes. And summer really will be here.

## How the mayor made me cross in Manhattan



**I**GIVE up. For months I have been doing my damndest to get arrested for jay-walking outside my office. If not arrested and thrown into solitary, then at least fined. Even a harsh tickling off would have worked. My reasoning was simple: suffer terrible punishment for crossing Madison Avenue at the wrong moment and at the wrong place and then explode with indignation in this diary.

It was just before Christmas, when our brilliant (some say crazed) mayor, Rudolph Giuliani, started messing about with one of the great delights of Manhattan: its walkability. Compared with almost any other American metropolis this seething isle is a pedestrian paradise. A lunch appointment 20 blocks away? Give yourself time - at a speedy

pace, say a block a minute - and walk it. If you do not like the immediate scenery, look at the people.

Here is an important thing to understand about walking from A to B in Manhattan, where the avenues (running north-south) and streets (west-east) are mostly laid out on a grid system. Or rather, it is not

important at all, but a pet fixation of mine. Your journey will be far more efficient, if it can be zig-zagged. If B is a straight shot from A - let us say they are both on Madison - you will be impeded repeatedly by traffic moving on the cross-streets. But if reaching B requires some rights and lefts, you are in much better shape. The

name of the game is to see if you can complete the journey without having to stop for cars at all.

Over the months I have perfected this, walking from the United Nations on 1st Avenue and 44th St to this office on 49th and Madison. Essentially this is an east-to-west journey. But I also have a five-

block south-north margin to play with. Rather than wait to cross an avenue if the traffic is moving, I can skitter north a block or two until the avenue traffic is halted. And cross.

Then along came Mr Giuliani and his clever plan to ease gridlock at the peak of Christmas shopping. Erect steel barriers at the busiest midtown

intersections, he decreed, and force pedestrians to cross them on one side only. The other side would be pedestrian-free, to allow traffic turning into the avenues to flow more freely.

Just an experiment, he said. The barriers would be gone in the New Year. Now, in mid-April, they are still

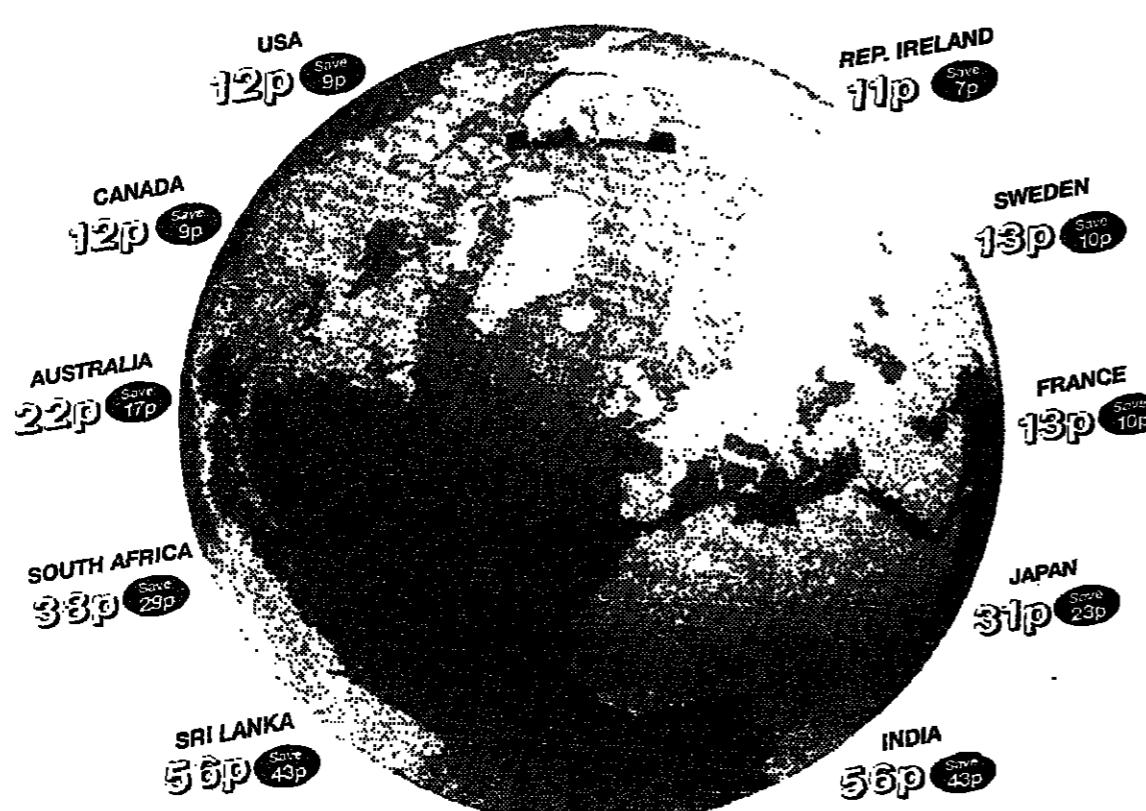
there and mostly, it seems, in the immediate vicinity of this office. And at every barrier stands a policeman watching for jaywalkers and stroppy reporters wanting to get arrested like me. Anyway, my whole system for zig-zag, non-stop foot-travel in New York is needless to say, in tatters.



Linger ice: Skaters at the Rockefeller Center prove it is still winter in New York

Photograph: Charles Knight/Rex Features

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## Japanese village waits nervously for Yeltsin

By Richard Lloyd Parry  
in Tokyo

**THERE** is a word in Japanese for the atmosphere surrounding Boris Yeltsin's visit to Japan this weekend, and that from the tourist association in Kawana, the tiny seaside village where the president will be staying, leaves no doubt what it is. *Meiwaku, meiwaku, meiwaku!* he says. "I want to shout it out loud! We locals are sick and tired of this - why couldn't they have their meeting in Tokyo?"

*Meiwaku* means nuisance, bother, irritation and inconvenience. In a society which values order and predictability above all things, creating a *meiwaku* is one of the worst things you can do.

To Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, Mr Yeltsin's visit is something of a coup, a chance to defrost a relationship which has been on ice since the end of the Second World War. Despite being near neighbours, the two countries have no peace treaty and little trade as a result of a lingering dispute over the Kuriles, a chain of desolate islands seized by Stalin at the end of the war.

But to everyone else, the Russian visit is a source of bafflement, anxiety and trepidation. With his abrupt changes of mind, uncertain health and volatile domestic situation, Mr Yeltsin is as un-Japanese and *meiwaku*-laden as it is possible to imagine.

Prominent among the anxieties is Mr Yeltsin's health. A distinguished Japanese heart surgeon has been put on stand-by in case the volcanic springs in which Mr Yeltsin and Mr Hashimoto are hoping to take a dip prove too much for his much-mended heart. But there is an even more basic concern: will the notoriously unreliable Mr Yeltsin turn up? It is almost certain now that he will, though memories are fresh of

the occasions in 1992 and 1993 when two presidential visits were called off after disagreement over the Kuriles. This time, thanks to the efforts of Mr Hashimoto, the atmosphere is warmer, although there was a panic last week when some confusing signals started coming out of Moscow. Bogged down in the Duma, which was stubbornly rejecting his choice of prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, Mr Yeltsin postponed his visit to this Saturday and Sunday.

If thoroughness is the great strength of Japanese officialdom, inflexibility is its weakness. The proposed venue - the Kawana Hotel, south-west of Tokyo, where Marilyn Monroe honeymooned with Joe DiMaggio - had turned away guests for the duration of the original visit. Suddenly, it had to cancel 600 reservations made for this weekend, too. Of three weddings, one could not be postponed - bride and groom will pass through metal detectors as they arrive to be married.

The 10 cherry trees specially transplanted for the delight of Mr Yeltsin's wife have, in the past few days, shed their famous blossoms. The rooms prepared for visiting journalists in the smaller hotels sit empty during one of the busiest weeks of the month. "We were turning down other guests and welcoming the media - now they refuse to pay their cancellation fee," says one irate hotelier. "There are traffic jams because of all the restrictions on cars. It doesn't matter who Yeltsin is, it won't do our village any good."

The poor traffic flow will help in one respect. As the robbers of the Kuriles, Russians are the special enemies of Japan's small but noisy right wing, who drive constantly around Tokyo blaring anti-communist slogans. Kawana has the advantage of narrow and restricted access by road. It should be enough to deter all but the most determined nationalists.

Spiderman: Alain Robert makes a mobile phone call after climbing to the top of the 23 metre high Luxor obelisk in the Place de la Concorde, Paris yesterday. He was later arrested for the stunt. Photograph: Michel Euler/AP

## Russia plans to build world's largest passenger airliner

By Phil Reeves  
in Moscow

**RUSSIAN** aircraft designers say they are planning a gigantic super jumbo jet which would be capable of carrying as many as 1,000 people - making it the largest passenger airliner in the world.

Sukhoi, which is renowned for its fighter jets, is seeking investors for the project in the hope of exploiting a sharp rise in demand forecast for large long-haul jets over the next few decades.

The vast aircraft, the KR-860 - otherwise known as "The Wings of Russia" - is intended to challenge the A3XX super jumbo being developed by Airbus Industrie, a four-nation European consortium which includes Britain. The latter, a four-engine double-decker affair, will initially carry 570 passengers in three classes, with a range of 7,500-8,500 miles. It is due off the blocks in 2003.



Mass flights: Boeing's 747-400, currently the world's largest airliner. The new jet would carry twice as many people

In terms of size alone, the Russian project is highly ambitious. It would carry nearly double the number of passengers as the Boeing 747 - the aircraft that has for decades dominated the jumbo market - and have more than twice the 440 seats in an Airbus A330.

"We understand that developing such a plane requires

substantial sums of money and we are trying to get it from Russian investors," Gennady Yampolsky, Sukhoi's deputy chief designer told Reuters.

It is also understood that Western investors are being canvassed. Until recently, Sukhoi was primarily known for its military aircraft, but last month it registered a commercial aviation consortium in Kazan, capital of the republic of Tatarstan in Russia.

Some industry estimates

place demand for jets of 550 seats or more at around 500 over the next 20 years, chiefly because of the shortage of funding slots at major hubs such as London and New York - a problem which would be solved by fewer but bigger aircraft. However, Airbus believes the orders will be higher than this.

■ Russia's acting prime minister, Sergei Kiriyenko, approved terms on Wednesday for financing a new inter-continental ballistic missile and promised to keep up funding for the defence industry.

Mr Kiriyenko, who is fighting for parliamentary approval for his nomination as prime minister, said he had accepted a monthly schedule for financing production of the Topol-M single-warhead missile. The missile is expected to be part of Russia's Strategic Nuclear Forces, thought to be in better shape than most of the underfunded armed forces.

## Americans run from the competition

**AMERICANS** are good sports. But when it comes to long-distance running, the normal sense of fair play seems to be fading. Too many Kenyans are winning races in the United States and steps are being taken to stop them, writes David Usborne in New York.

Thus when competitors gather in Boulder, Colorado, next month for one of America's premier distance meets, only three Kenyans will be allowed to enter. Otherwise, say the race's organisers and

its corporate sponsors, Kenya will sweep away the US competition.

Last year, at the Boulder race, called Bolder Boulder, six of the first eight places were taken by Kenyans. In 1996, Kenyans accounted for eight of the first 10 finishers.

Not only will the number of Kenyan entrants be limited this year, but there will also be a skewed distribution of the \$32,000 (£19,000) in prize money. Any American who finishes in the top five will earn double the normal cash.

Is this unfair and racist? Maybe. But the folks in Boulder are unmoved. Race director Bill Reef told the *New York Times*: "It's our country, our event, our money. American sponsors want American winners, or at least Americans among the top finishers."

Craig Moshach of USA Track & Field, the sport's governing body, said: "We're not limiting opportunities for foreigners but creating opportunities for Americans."

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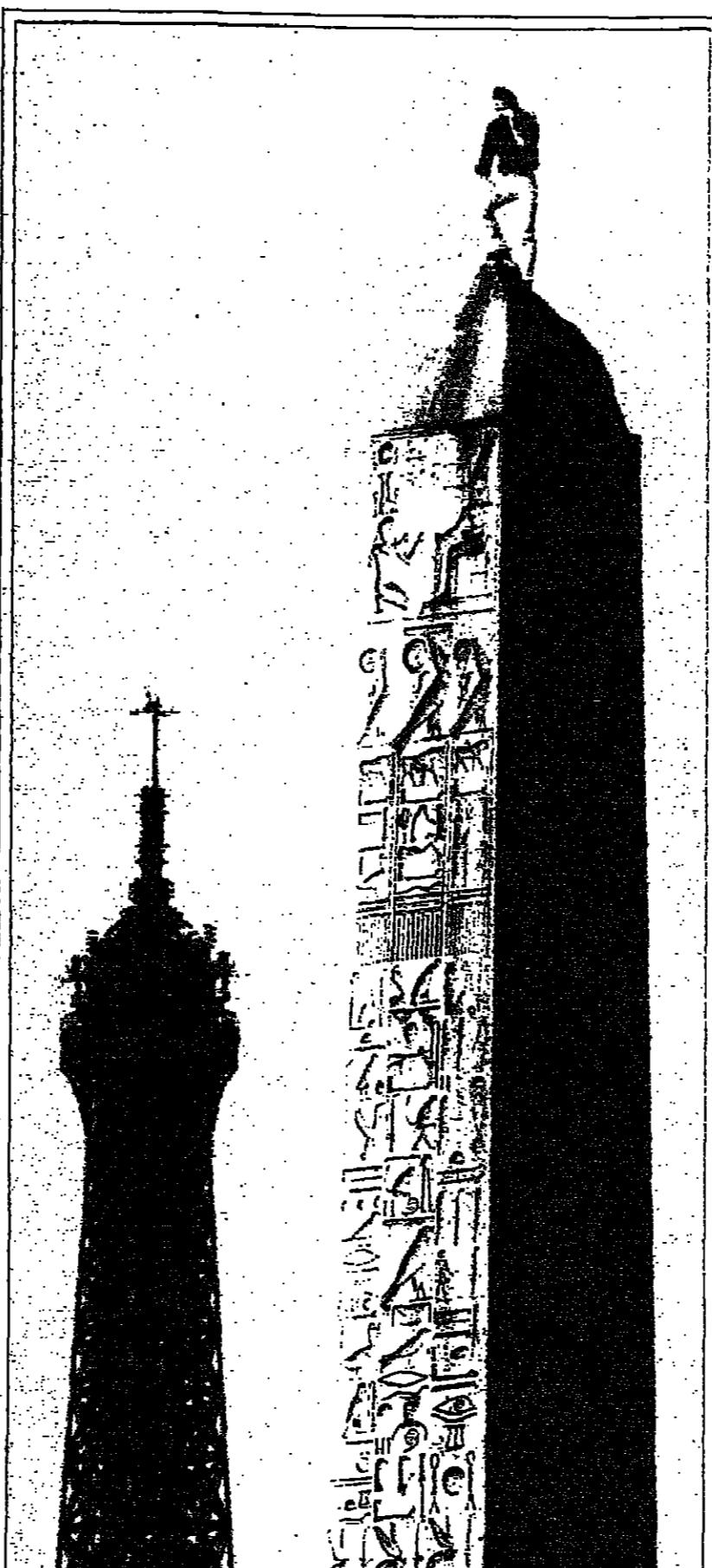
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## Court shown Botha's apartheid era hit-list

By Mary Braid  
in Cape Town

**A HIT-LIST** of enemies of the apartheid state drawn up by PW Botha's State Security Council was presented to a South African court yesterday by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as part of its case for subpoenaing the former president.

Appearing before a black judge in the courtroom at George, on the south-east coast, Mr Botha, 82, the former custodian of apartheid, who is charged with defying an order to appear before the TRC, is no doubt well aware that South Africa has changed. But the list, drawn up in 1980, was another reminder.

Many of those he targeted

for surveillance and detention - including former Archbishop Desmond Tutu, now chairman of the TRC, Arthur Chaskalson, president of the Constitutional Court, Sidney Mufumadi, safety and security minister, and Dullah Omar, the justice minister - now run

the TRC. PW Botha read old state documents ordering the "identification and elimination of revolutionary leaders and particularly those with charisma" and the "physical destruction" of revolutionaries, inside and outside the country.

The TRC wants to discuss the documents with Mr Botha as part of its bid to trace responsibility for apartheid-era atrocities. Witnesses have told the TRC that Mr Botha sanctioned violence, although the former president has denied he was an Afrikaner and Christian" would do so.

At the height of Mr Botha's rule, 31,000 opponents of apartheid were jailed without charge and 20,000 people were killed in political violence, according to human rights organisations.

In a submission to the TRC last year, Mr Botha's successor as president, FW de Klerk, claimed that while the ruling National Party might have created the conditions which allowed human rights violations to take place it never sanctioned them. It is a position many refuse to accept, including former high-ranking policemen and military personnel who have claimed they took their orders from the very top.

Mr Botha is contesting the TRC's right to subpoena him. Attempts to find an out-of-court settlement delayed the beginning of his trial and led to a postponement of the criminal case yesterday.

The former president said in a statement that he found the delay unacceptable. Earlier he had turned angrily to his lawyers and said: "This case was set down for four days. Come let's go on." But the court agreed to a prosecution request for a postponement. The case will resume on 1 June.

## UN to pull out of Congo

By David Usborne  
in New York

**AMIDST** clear anger at the government of Laurent Kabila, the United Nations is preparing to withdraw a human rights mission from the Democratic Republic of Congo (formerly Zaire). The suspicion is that the massacres were encouraged by Rwanda's Tutsi-led government, which feared that the Hutus - blamed for slaughtering up to a million Tutsis in Rwanda - would return home.

While a final decision may not be taken until the weekend, the UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, indicated yesterday that the team in Congo would be coming home. "We have done the maximum and tried to go the extra mile," he said. "The search for the truth will go on by other means."

Dispatched last August, the UN team was investigating claims that large numbers of

Rwandan Hutu refugees were slaughtered in the east of the country during the early stages of Mr Kabila's march to power in 1996 and 1997. He toppled the dictator of the former Zaire, Mobutu Sese Seko, last May. The suspicion is that the massacres were encouraged by Rwanda's Tutsi-led government, which feared that the Hutus - blamed for slaughtering up to a million Tutsis in Rwanda - would return home.

The 25-strong team, however, has received scant co-operation from the Kabila government and constant harassment on the ground. Last week, a Canadian member of the group was detained overnight. Mary Robinson, the UN high commissioner for human rights, denounced the action as a "flagrant breach" of Kinshasa's obligation.

The Secretary General is expected to ask a Chilean human rights lawyer, Roberto Garretón, to continue the investigation in neighbouring countries. Mr Garretón was chosen last year to head a first mission, but was asked to step down by Mr Annan when Mr Kabila objected.

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# Boose Worth millions. The shirts that is

The cost of replica football kit can take the shirt off your back. Tim Hulse finds out how it happens

FOR months it's been the subject of fevered speculation. Journalists have done their best to reveal its secrets but without much success. Small boys have tossed and turned at night anticipating its arrival. And now, at the Match of The Day Live at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre, it was about to be revealed to the public gaze for the very first time.

The packed crowd of football fans around the catwalk waits expectantly and you can almost cut the atmosphere with a knife. And then suddenly, with no fanfare, there it is, on the backs of Andy Cole, Nicky Butt and Ole Gunnar Solskjær.

It's the new Manchester United home shirt! There's a deafening roar as the players walk sheepishly to the front of the catwalk so we can appreciate this ground-breaking piece of sports apparel in all its glory.

For this is no ordinary football shirt. It boasts a revolutionary non-locking zip for

which the makers, Umbro, had to obtain special approval from the Football Association. And there's another first - the shirts will also be available in special "women's fits", one of which resembles a dress. The shirts go on sale on 19 May and look set to be the biggest selling football shirts ever. This is not just a football shirt to cover the backs of a Premier League team. This is big business: part of a merchandising industry which is worth £200 million a year. It provides ready profits for the team, and similar riches for the sportswear industry.

Replica shirts are one of the largest sectors of the £1.6 billion sports and leisurewear market, which is expected to grow by 20 per cent before the millennium. Clubs are believed to earn at least £10 per shirt sold to dedicated fans, on top of returns from the manufacturers.

Top of the shirt league is

Manchester United: last year the club achieved a record £27 million profits from merchandising, including sales of half a million shirts under its deal with Umbro.

Current guidelines urge clubs not to change their kit more than once every two years, but revenue is maximised by their having several different home and away strips. Last year Manchester United issued a fourth strip for its players to wear in the Champions' League, with replicas costing £80 for an adult and £63 for children. Manchester's fans

have been especially devoted. In the last five years, the strip has changed 13 times.

Sportswear giants such as Adidas, Reebok and Nike, together with football specialists like Umbro, fight hard to get the juiciest slices of the pie. "Everyone wants the same thing," says Robin Money, of Adidas UK, which manufactures Newcastle United's kit.

"We all want the big clubs. We

don't want hundreds of clubs, we just want the best ones."

And they're willing to pay higher and higher prices to get them. Back in 1992, when Nike signed a £4 million deal to supply Arsenal's kit, the news shocked the sportswear industry. "Silly money," people said. But if that was silly, then things were soon to become truly ridiculous as the bandwagon started to roll. Bigger deals quickly followed for both Rangers and Newcastle and within three years, Reebok had

put pen to paper to finalise a five-year deal with Liverpool said to be worth around £25 million. Shortly afterwards Umbro stumped up around £60m to continue their arrangement with Manchester United for another six years.

So just how silly has it got? "The prices are certainly getting very high," says Money, "and that's simply because it's a very competitive marketplace."

At a recent football business conference, Edward Freedman, the former Manchester United merchandising manager who is widely credited with helping to create football's commercial boom, warned that replica shirt sales are falling.

Since the money paid out by sportswear companies is an advance against royalties on products sold, a dip in the market could leave some of them considerably over-stretched. Freedman's view is

echoed by Richard Perks, senior

retail analyst at Verdict, a company specialising in retail trade surveys. "It's certainly our impression that the market's peaked," he says. "It was still growing last year, but I think it probably peaked around the year end."

However, the manufacturers disagree with these gloomy forecasts, maintaining that sales are traditionally fairly flat at this time of year, while Colin Russell, the replica buyer at JJB Sports, which has over 200 hundred stores nationwide selling replica kit, says the market is in fact booming.

"We're seeing growth, not a reduction in sales," he says. And the World Cup should certainly help. The new Brazil shirt was launched a couple of weeks ago and it's selling "way beyond expectation", according to Russell.

Which will no doubt be good news for Nike, which recently paid a whopping £250 million for the rights to manufacture it for the next ten years.

Certainly it's in both the clubs' and the manufacturers' interests to keep the prices high, because a price war could begin to affect royalties. Bargain hunters usually find it hard to track down bargain-priced shirts although last week Safeway put a limited number of official England kits on sale at £10 less than the normal price. On this occasion Safeway managed to obtain the kits from a third party, rather from the makers, Umbro.

One recent special offer from JJB Sports put the current Liverpool home shirt on sale for just £12.99. The shirt is due to be changed next month and JJB Sports obtained the shirts from the makers, Reebok, in a clearance deal.

What was interesting about that particular special offer was the clue it gave to the actual cost price of replica shirts, which retail at an unofficial standard price of £39.99 for a basic adult's short-sleeved shirt.

When I asked the normally voluble Edward Freedman if replica shirts only cost a fiver to make, he replied simply, "I'll leave you to do the research on that."

Which is what I did, by speaking to someone who until recently worked for one of the major manufacturers. He told me that the cost of making shirts depends to a certain extent on the amount of embroidery and printing involved, but "you could easily get a quote for about £7 for that type of product".

And who can blame them? As long as fans are willing to buy replica shirts, then the manufacturers will keep on churning them out. As Robin Money at Adidas points out, "It's a business. Clubs are there to make money and we're there to make money."

Where does the £35 cost of a replica shirt go?

Made in factory for £5

Sold to sportswear company for £7.50

Sold to retailer for £13.50

Sold in the shop for £35



Moneymakers: Ole Gunnar Solskjær, Nicky Butt and Andy Cole show off Manchester United's new strip at Match of the Day Live at Birmingham's NEC. Photograph: NTI

## What happens after the last dance is over?

Nicola Barranger finds help is at hand for ballet dancers who can't face a life away from the stage

FIVE years ago Stephen Wicks was at the peak of his career. As a principal of the Birmingham Royal Ballet, he'd had several roles choreographed specially for him. Today he is "retired" from ballet and well-established in his second career owning a flower shop with fellow ex-dancer, Mark Welford. Both realise now that when they went into business, it was not just the commercial world they were naive about. Like most dancers they were pretty naive about life outside dance as well.

Mark puts this late maturing down to the fact that the ballet company disliked anyone showing initiative. "You're treated like children all the time, being told what to do even after you're 30. I wouldn't have minded so much if people had listened to me some of the time. If you ever said something, you were slapped down imme-



nately for being rude or you were just not listened to. That's why people mature less quickly. They don't have to do anything for themselves; they're not allowed to".

If dancers retire in their twenties, (often because of injury), the adjustment to life after dance can be especially hard. They may not have fulfilled themselves as a dancer, nor, if their training has been particularly strict, matured completely as an individual. Angelica MacArthur admits now, that 23 was far too early for her to give up. "I felt that I needed another place in which to continue the growth within myself." Unlike most dancers, she admits she has enormous regrets. "I had a tremendous period of grieving for what I had prematurely given up. It took a good 10 years for me to overcome that grief, that pain."

Her experience inspired her to offer other dancers counselling, something she would have appreciated when she was mourning the loss of her own dancing career.

"For about two or three years I turned my back on ballet. I couldn't bear to watch it, it was too acutely painful. Seven years later, it really hit me that it had been like a death and I wasn't going to go back. It was

then that Angelica went into psycho-analysis to work through the depression.

Not all dancers suffer such intense bereavement. Much depends on the level at which the dancer leaves. Margaret Barbieri was one of the Royal Ballet's principal dancers in the mid-Seventies and was fortunate enough to continue performing until well into her forties. Giving up was not the problem, she says. Thinking about it gave her the most angst.

"I spent many nights crying about it and just not being able to come to terms with the fact that I was going to have to stop. It was the fear of the unknown."

Today Margaret Barbieri is



Mark Welford and Stephen Wicks (left) have made a successful transition from stage to floristry, but for other dancers the future is not so clear

Photographs: Nicola Kurz/David Rose

a director of ballet at the London Studio Centre and says she gets a much pleasure out of seeing her students develop and achieve their own success.

Until recently, there was no encouragement to think about life without dancing.

Even today, many young dancers have to be forced to plan for their second career. Linda Yates is Executive Director of the Dance Companies Resettlement Fund and visits the ballet companies regularly to encourage the youngsters to think about the impossible.

"I'm quite blunt about it. I say to the dancers - it is a fact, your career will come to an end in your early thirties". There is the usual sort of denial, because if you love a career that much you can't ever imagine it ending."

Five major British companies pay into the resettlement fund which gives grants to dancers in "transition" to a new career, helping people like Stephen Wicks and Mark Welford retrain in floristry. "When I first came to this job, resettlement for many dancers, equalled retirement equalled

## Listen to this man



### The 1998 McCormick Lecture

Martin Sorrell is Group Chief Executive of WPP Group, which in 1997 generated a group annual turnover of £7.3bn. Under his leadership WPP has become the world's leading communications services group, employing 22,000 people, within 30 companies, in 90 countries.

In recent years the role of WPP Group has expanded from one of traditional holding company to value added parent company, adding distinct value to clients and even greater opportunities and rewards for its people. By adding value to the centre WPP believe they can demonstrate tangible results.

Martin Sorrell is also an enthusiastic supporter of The Association of MBAs and as a part of the McCormick Lecture series, will be giving a talk explaining how WPP is working to ensure that for them, the whole adds up to more than the sum of its parts. The talk will be held on April 20th, 1998.

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# THE INDEPENDENT

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## Vote out the rotten boroughs

NOW, here's a puzzle for the keen student of current affairs. Do you know who Richard Leese is? Or George Michaelwright? Or Frank McAvety? No? Didn't think so. Well, they are, respectively, the leaders of Manchester, Bristol and Glasgow city councils. They should be as well known as say, Peter Lilley. Make that "better known". They're very important people because, local government for all the knocks it took under the Conservatives, still matters. It is not just about emptying the bins. Councils still have a significant role in educating our children, planning and protecting our environments, providing social services for our most vulnerable neighbours. Elections to them should be treated as more than a glorified public opinion poll or a playground for spin doctors to minimise expectations and maximise hype. For the next few weeks try not to listen to Tony Blair, Paddy Ashdown or William Hague. Ignore them. Use your local media, read the council candidates' election addresses. Councillors deserve to be assessed on their records and not those of their parties nationally. Too few of us bother.

On 7 May, millions of voters will turn out for elections to councils all over the country. Or rather many millions more will stay at home and give voting a miss. We are used to the idea that turnout in local elections is low, but a few months ago participation in the democratic process hit a new low, in Melrose ward, Liverpool, just 67 souls could be bothered to drag themselves to the polling stations out of an electorate of just under 11,000 (a 6.3 per cent turnout). As Roy Castle might have said, it was a low-polling, poor-turning, democratically insecure record-breaker. As a result, though, Labour lost its overall majority on Liverpool City Council. This should have been a major, hard-fought political event. But because people became inured to the idea that they can make no difference hardly anyone bothered to turn out. Who would?

There are plenty of places where extreme political domination has killed democracy. We have, in this country, one-party statists in some of our town halls that might make the late Kim Il Sung blush. In Rotherham, in Newham and in Lincoln there are no opposition councillors. None. All Labour members. What do we suppose the debates are like? This is the kind of set-up that breeds complacency and worse. Some of the worst of the recent scandals have been associated with this kind of historical domination. Doncaster, still being investigated by the police, is but one example. Nowadays there are even Liberal Democrat administrations, like the one in Richmond in London, where the competition seems to have been eliminated.

The Prime Minister and his colleagues are aware of the problem and have produced a stream of ideas. Almost all their proposals are praiseworthy, even the notion of placing ballot boxes in supermarkets. Most of all we are delighted that, referendum permitting, there will be a directly elected mayor for London. We hope that this will be extended. We are also delighted that the Government will be giving London an assembly elected under a system of proportional representation to balance the power of the mayor. What we find puzzling, disappointing and inconsistent in the Government's proposals thus far is that it seems to have set itself against extending PR to other parts of the country. PR, other things being equal, brings with it a greater possibility of change, reduces the perception that a vote is "wasted", and tends to make for competitive politics.

Let's face it, the existing rotten boroughs are bad enough, but imagine what things would be like if the Government extended the idea of directly elected mayors without PR assemblies. No auditor on earth would be able to help some of the people who will have to live under a powerful mayor or backed by a council chamber stuffed with members of his own party. The kind of balance we see in the London model should be good enough for us all. It may take some years to come. We don't think local democracy can wait that long. In the meantime, on 7 May, we should use the opportunities that we do have to start dismantling the one-party states. And, despite the temptation, do not cast a verdict on Blair's first year. Vote local.

## Dunces in cyberspace

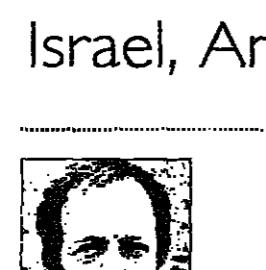
THE ODD THING about people who do not use computers is how often they overestimate the power of technology. There are the ignorant enthusiasts who think that computers are the answer to every problem. And there are the fearful technophobes, like the elderly women who reputedly will not use cash machines in case they inadvertently drain all the money from their accounts by pressing the wrong button. Both make the mistake of attributing mystical qualities to inert masses of chips and transistors.

The enthusiasts are the sort of people who think that, if only they had an electronic organiser, their lives would be organised, although the chief enthusiast, the Prime Minister, is too busy running the world - from a sofa, armed with a fountain pen and a telephone - to fill his head with icons. As he admitted yesterday: "I write my speeches in longhand and others type them up". Still, a photo-opportunity with a granny in a library browsing through the porn - sorry, valuable public resources - on the Internet helps identify Tony Blair as a leader in touch with the future.

Genuine computer users, on the other hand, know well the frustrations of misnamed helplines and unintelligible error messages. They know that computers are stupid and fallible and can make simple tasks incredibly complicated. But they also know that we cannot do without them. To take one example at random, *The Independent* is totally dependent on computers and is several times more efficient than newspapers were using the old technology.

The Government's plans to equip schools with computers are not a panacea, but they are necessary. World leaders and old ladies may be able to get by without knowing their mouse from their e-mail, but children need to learn about computers, digital warts and all.

However, it is only when computers have become so mundane and boring that politicians do not bother to talk about them, that we will know we have really arrived in the Information Age.



MILES  
KINGTON

17 APRIL 1998

NEWCASTLE United have known some bad times recently. Their very expensive footballers seem unable to win matches, and their equally expensive directors seem unable to win friends, or even keep their jobs. This is presumably very bad news in Newcastle, where pride and football tend to go hand in hand, but I cannot say it is very bad news elsewhere - at least, I didn't think so until I saw a headline the other day which said that Newcastle were in danger of slipping from the national affection.

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of Sir John Hall, a man who does not seem to inspire much affection even in Newcastle, I would have thought that it was more likely to be unpopular than popular. But then can any one side in football be popular beyond its local area? Only Manchester United has the reputation of being such a side. Man Utd supporters have the strange distinction of being able to come from anywhere - you don't have to come from Manchester or even to have been to Manchester to be a Man Utd supporter. Indeed, there is one school of thought which says it is probably easier to support Manchester United if you have never been there.

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chester but there are people who are incredibly irked by Manchester United who have never been near the place, in a way that would never happen, I think, to Chelsea or Liverpool. I don't think Arsenal are universally popular either, but there does seem to be a wave of prayer and desire that Arsenal should overtake Man Utd at the end of this season and deprive them of the title, and it isn't just a wave of relief that it is not a one-horse race after all.

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But I suppose that when you are top dog at local or international level, you have to get used to being unpopular. The Americans have had a great deal of practice at this (America had a hundred years ago), because nobody likes the self-appointed chief traffic warden of the world. In America's case, there are compensations, of course. The Americans don't mind being universally disliked, because very few of them have noticed that it has happened. They find it easier to bear unpopularity when so many of us put our hands into our pockets and buy so much of their junk culture, from the

Oscar ceremonies to Coke and McDonald's. (Indeed, if you were looking for the most unpopular body in the world, it would have to be someone in America who was unpopular even by American standards. American lawyers, perhaps. British editors of American papers...)

But I don't want to seem sour at the end of the week, so I would like to end on a humorous note. In fact, on a humorous and indelicate note, which brings us back to football, in the shape of an excellent joke I heard from comedian Mark Thomas, as follows:

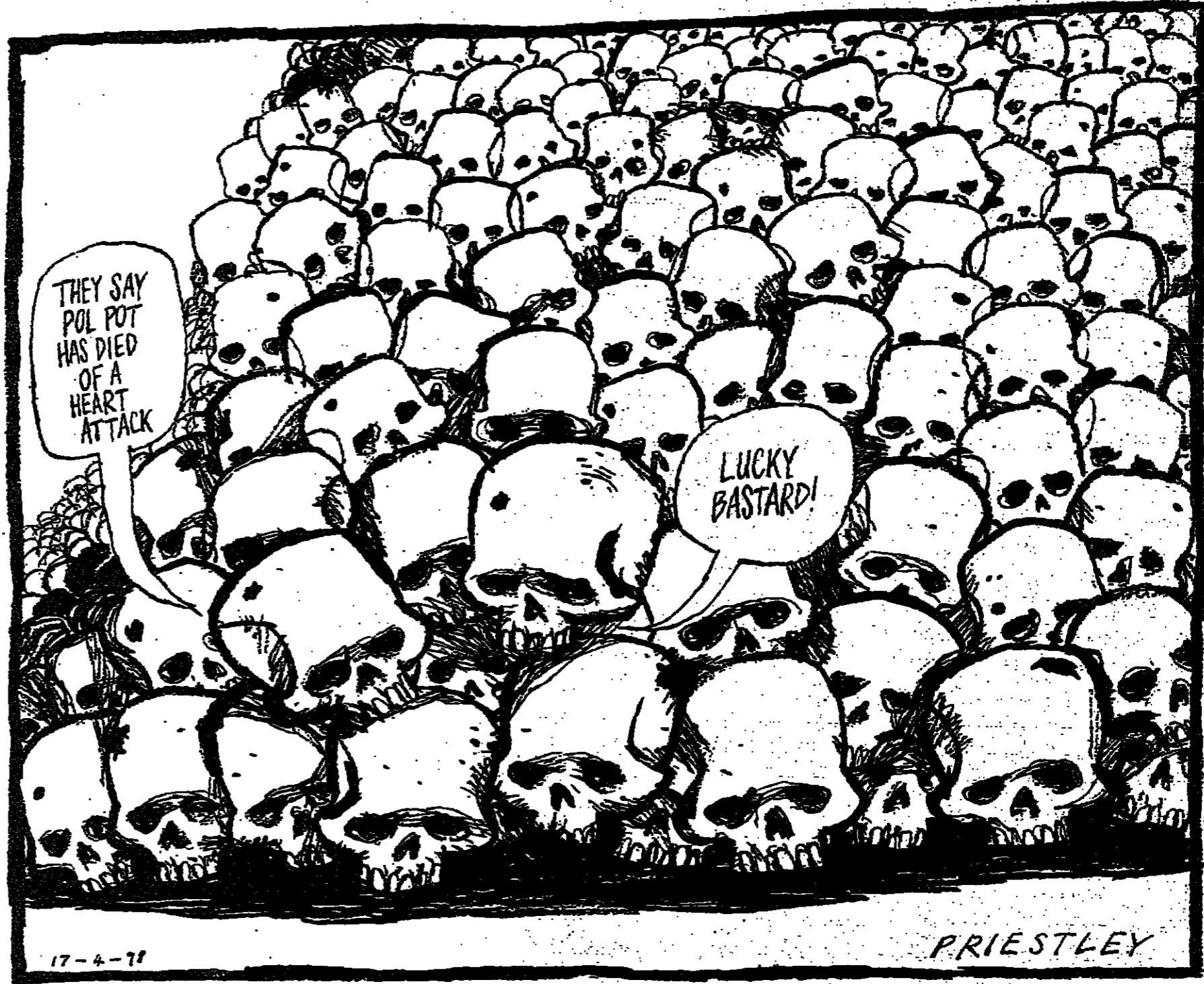
"Which three League football teams have rude words in their names?"

"I don't know. Which three League football teams have rude words in their names?"

"Arsenal, Scunthorpe and F---ing Manchester United."

All letters from Man Utd fans, Zionists and American lawyers will be courteously ignored.

## 16/COMMENT



PRIESTLEY

### Poisons on the farm

YOUR report "Hidden menace of nerve-gas poisons in sheep dip" (15 April) highlights the link between ME-like illness and exposure to organophosphates. I note that it has taken years of protracted struggle for this connection to be taken seriously.

The fact that not all farmers who use OP-based dips have developed illness clearly suggests that sensitivity to the poison is variable across the population. The probability must therefore exist that some people are vulnerable to the low-level but persistent contamination found in the environment.

Used sheep dips have regularly found their way into the nearest watercourse, whether by accident or recklessness. Resulting "low"-level contamination will therefore sometimes be much higher than we are led to believe. OPs also find their way into our bodies as spray residues both on and inside "healthy" vegetables.

It is likely that meat also contains OP residues, as the drenching of cattle is intended to make their bodies poisonous to the warble fly. Now that the Somerset farmer Mark Purdy has finally found the ear of the sub-borough deaf establishment, we may find out officially what these toxins played in the BSE epidemic.

So far as ME is concerned, some research has been done. One study found that sheep-dipper's illness and "typical" ME were clinically identical, suggesting that both entities share a common pathogenesis. (*Chronic Fatigue Syndrome as a Delayed Reaction to Chronic Low-dose Organophosphate Exposure*. Behan, 1996).

Perhaps it is time for the Government to fund some serious and committed research into the insidious poisoning of the population, since by current estimates there are 100,000 people with ME in this country and tinkering with the benefit system does not seem to have cured them.

STEVE SMAILES  
Warminster, Wiltshire

I AM writing to pick up on the points in Joanna Wheatley's letter (8 April) about research into a possible link between organophosphates and BSE.

The Ministry of Agriculture, Fish-

eries and Food have not yet agreed to finance any research in this area. We would however be prepared to consider research applications, from scientists who wish to work in this area, as part of our ongoing commitment to support research, including independent research, into BSE. Any application would be considered on its own merit in competition with other applications for financial support and could involve peer review.

Ms Wheatley's letter quite rightly points out a number of important issues in relation to the design of particular kinds of experiments in this area, although there are other approaches. We would expect any applicant to have thought through the need for proper controls in this as in any scientific experiment.

Dr D W F SHANNON  
Chief Scientist, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food  
London SW1

### Defence review

I WELCOME the acknowledgement by Dave Knight of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (Letters, 15 April) that the strategic Defence Review has been a truly strategic review of Britain's conventional force capability matched to the reality of international stability. I must however clarify the position on other points.

First, I can assure Mr Knight that the review has indeed been foreign-policy led and that it has considered all aspects of defence policy, including our nuclear deterrent. The Government was elected on a manifesto commitment to retain Trident as a credible minimum deterrent and our work has naturally therefore started from that basis. We are, however, prepared to look afresh at all aspects of how this commitment should be implemented. I am confident that this fresh look at deter-

rence will be a key feature of the review's final conclusions.

Second, I reject entirely Mr Knight's assertion that we have been obstructive in our approach to nuclear arms control. Our manifesto commitment to multilateral negotiations to achieve mutual, balanced and verifiable reductions in nuclear weapons, with the goal of their global elimination, is very clear. With this in mind, we have now ratified the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (no other nuclear weapon state except France has yet done so), and we are looking at how to take our commitment further forward. We do, however, remain to be convinced that seeking a time-based framework for nuclear disarmament, as advocated by some in New York and Geneva, is a practical way to make progress.

Dr JOHN REID  
Minister of State for the Armed Forces  
Ministry of Defence  
London SW1

### Church in turmoil

I AM one of very few "spare" priests in a deaconry with several parishes "in vacancy". I spend a lot of time driving around a big area enabling congregations to receive the Blessed Sacrament, which they couldn't otherwise do, and I find them, without exception, welcoming and grateful. I found it really hard to take that

*The Independent* should see fit to publish the obscene, ugly and very hurtful paintings of Fr John Pelling with his "tooting" for women priests (Back Page, 13 April). If "Forward in Faith" is prepared to receive money from such a source then it is an even more dubious body than I have always thought it.

The Rev JUNE SIMPSON  
Workshop, Nottinghamshire

GEORGE AUSTIN'S disillusionment with the Church of England is clearly shared by many, as falling

Co of E congregations show ("Austin gives 'too liberal' church one last chance", 13 April). The church's message seems increasingly to be "You're all right. There are no real moral absolutes. Anything goes."

But people have consciences, however much they wish they didn't) and an intuitive knowledge that they are accountable for the way they live. So when the clergy constantly alter their stance to try to please people and draw them into the church, people recognise the hollowness and the hypocrisy - and they leave in droves.

Rather than celebrating human nature as it is, the church must return to addressing how far short we fall of being the men and women God intended us to be. Only then will people see the church as relevant. HUGH J THOMSON  
Birmingham

### Name these isles

TRIONA CAREY (letter, 14 April) questions whether the British Isles should be renamed.

In his book *The Third World War* General Sir John Hackett has written that in 1982-83 in talks between the British and Irish governments some form of association covering the British Isles was considered for the Isles of the North Atlantic (for which the happy acronym IONA had already been coined). What an excellent name for these islands.

Col H T ROKE  
Woodstock, Oxfordshire

Chicken or egg

YOU QUOTE the agricultural manager of Tesco as saying: "There is absolutely no reason why any chicken or turkey should have to suffer during its life" ("Tesco to talk to its chickens", 13 April). Does this mean that Tesco are to stop selling battery eggs? VESNA JONES  
London NW4

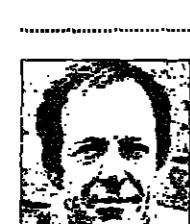
### War games

EVA PASCOE (Network+, 14 April) is worried about violent computer games. Children have been playing games involving swords, guns, bows and arrows and other weapons almost since children have been playing games at all. Why should a game that happens to have a plug at the end be any more of a threat?

LISA DONOVAN  
London E1

17 APRIL 1998

## Israel, America, Manchester United and the secret of unpopularity



MILES  
KINGTON

17 APRIL 1998

NEWCASTLE United have known some bad times recently. Their very expensive footballers seem unable to win matches, and their equally expensive directors seem unable to win friends, or even keep their jobs. This is presumably very bad news in Newcastle, where pride and football tend to go hand in hand, but I cannot say it is very bad news elsewhere - at least, I didn't think so until I saw a headline the other day which said that Newcastle were in danger of slipping from the national affection.

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"Which three League football teams have rude words in their names?"

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## Born in the east, educated in the west – a tyrant for the world



RUPERT  
CORNWELL  
THE LEGACY  
OF POL POT

FOR SOME CRIMES there can be no atonement, no purification. "We are clean now," was the quoted reaction of the Khmer Rouge who had guarded Pol Pot in the last months of his life, after he was removed as the guerrilla movement's leader. "His death is good for the Khmer Rouge," said another. "I hope his bad name will vanish with his death." But it never should and, let us pray, it never will. Not in the small Asian country which he has scarred for generations, nor in the world beyond. For Pol Pot was not simply a regional aberration. He is not to be seen as a perverted but logically explicable variant of what these days, in a different context, are called "Asian values". In not one, but two, senses he was also a creation of the West.

The proximate association of course lies in America's war in Vietnam. Without it the North Vietnamese would never have crossed over into Cambodia. B-52s would never have bombed their bases. King Sihanouk might never have been overthrown and the Communist-dominated resistance movement which Pol Pot led to power in 1975 might never have been born. That does not make America responsible for his crimes, any more than the allied powers having humiliated Germany at Versailles, were therefore to blame for Hitler and the Holocaust. But without the Americans, Pol Pot would not have had his opportunity for revolution.

And where were the germs of that revolution sown? Not in Phnom Penh, Moscow or even Peking – but in Cambodia's imperial capital of Paris, where Saloth Sar, later to become Pol Pot, studied from 1949 to 1952. There was born his devotion to Communism, and again the question arises: why did this ideology invented by Germans to deal with Western social problems thrive best in the East? And why with such brutality in Cambodia? Perhaps France, home of Europe's most single-minded revolution, is part of the answer. Would-be revolutionaries who drink from its culture seem to imbibe a unique ruthlessness, an ability to subordinate the most savage means to the desired end. Algeria is one example. So too the demonic *jusqu'au-boutisme* of Pol Pot.

On the scale of evil established in this most violent century in human history, he belongs, in relative terms, at the very top. To further his dream of an agrarian Marxist regime – sketched upon a blackboard wiped totally clean, where every link with the past, with other traditions and philosophies, with the outside world, was ground for execution – between 1 and 1.7 million people, up to almost a quarter of the population, were murdered. Hitler never managed as much. Conceivably, the Lenin/Stalin tandem, a closer historic parallel with Pol Pot, did, if you accept the worst estimates of the purges, terrors and the famines they inflicted upon the Soviet Union in the name of Communism. Saddam Hussein, Slobodan Milosevic and other

ers who exercise us so much today, are minors by comparison.

But the most terrible thing to be learnt from Pol Pot is that we never learn. He was proof that the first half of this most violent century in history did not have the patient rights on human holocaust. Even more depressing though, the circumstances that permit these holocausts do not change. Just as the world could not believe the first reports of Hitler's extermination of the Jews, and was long duped over Stalin's terror, so the accounts of those who managed to escape the sealed Cambodia of the late 1970s were only partially believed. Surely, no one could do such things, or even want to do such things. How much more comfortable not to contemplate such awful possibilities. How quickly we forgot the reality of Auschwitz, barely 30 years before.

But by the time Pol Pot turned his malign attentions to his fellow citizens, Cambodia did not matter. The Vietnam war had already been won and lost – less than a fortnight after he entered Phnom Penh, the North Vietnamese marched into Saigon and the last helicopter took off from the roof of the US Embassy. No American wanted to hear of Indochina ever again. Five years later the dimension of Pol Pot's genocide was becoming apparent – but realpolitik took over: from 1980 America was quietly backing the Khmer Rouge, in the higher interest of getting the Vietnamese out of Cambodia.

Captured in such geopolitical rides, a tiny faraway country has no chance. Cambodia possessed no precious commodity such as the oil that saved Kuwait from Saddam. And, one is tempted to add, back then there was no CNN or BBC World TV to bring the truth into our homes – only brave print journalists

Pol Pot was not simply a regional aberration, not just a perverted variant of 'Asian values'

like Sydney Schanberg of the *New York Times*, whose reporting made the term "Killing Field" a shorthand for state-sponsored mass-murder. But don't expect miracles from modern communications technology. The global village still has its lit back alleys, *Algeria* for instance, where six years of atrocities have gone virtually uncovered. It is simply too dangerous, even for the boldest TV crew with super-minaturized equipment. And even if we saw the images every evening, could we summon the will to intervene? I doubt it – at least not until the chaos stopped Algerian gas from reaching our central heating systems.

So what now? Towards the end of his life there was much talk of bringing Pol Pot before an international court to answer for his crimes. But China, his main supporter during his rule, would almost certainly have blocked it; nor would countries like Thailand and the US, which helped him later, have been overjoyed at the prospect. The best to be hoped is that some of his main accomplices might be sent for trial. A case of monkeys without the organ-grinder perhaps. But it would at least be a start, an attempt to explain something which for most of us is simply inexplicable. The greatest danger of all is that Pol Pot slips, unلامmented and unremembered, into the small print of history. That would be a final ghastly injustice to Cambodia and a dreadful mistake by the world. Maybe just maybe, human nature is perfectible. If not, then those who forget the past are condemned to repeat it.

## Free the teachers, they're better than their unions



DAVID  
AARONOVITCH  
NIGEL DE GRUCHY'S  
GROUCHY VIEWS

For much of the last month I have felt as though someone has been calling me up every day and trying to shake me down. Not with libel writs or threats of violence, nor by sending round unwanted pizzas or bashes, but with making things difficult for my kids at school. You know, awkward; stopping a lesson here maybe, or getting school trips cancelled for a term, or closing down the choir after school – that kind of stuff. And, mild fellow though I am, I've just about had enough of it.

So, let me thrust forward, blinking to the villain's dais, and crown with a garland of mouldy leeks, Mr Nigel de Gruchy, General Secretary of the National Association of Schoolmasters – Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT). Mr de Gruchy, as you will see – though certainly not alone in trying to mess up my children's education

– exemplifies the attitude of defensive, backward-looking, reactive and self-pitying conservatism, that seems to have prevailed for 20 years among sections of Britain's hopelessly divided and competing teaching unions. I await his appearances with fear: his desecrated features and his Dickensian habit of adding a hanging "eh", like a verbal wart on the end of his consonants, inevitably accompany some terrible complaint of injury, or ingenious objection to the slightest change. He's deedly-deedly, he's degrumpy. He's not delightful.

At this point some of you will be mentally defending him from my impetuous attack. Good for you. But all I ask is that you look at the evidence. Just examine what has been said over the last three weeks or so.

Let us begin with the campaign to cut down on bureaucracy in the classroom. Teachers, the argument goes, are overburdened with form-filling and paper shuffling, associated with testing, inspections, reports and so on. Mr Blunkett has suggested that he is sympathetic to this complaint, and is considering ways in which the admin can be reduced.

But in case Mr B hasn't got his arse sufficiently into gear by the next autumn term, Mr de Gruchy has a cunning plan. His members may walk out of any extracurricular meetings that last more than an hour a week, they could well boycott "administrative tasks" like collecting money for school trips, or copying letters to parents. And they may not write anything longer than 400 words. According to Mr de Gruchy, this is "industrialeh actioneh with a halo", because its implementation will not af-

fect the education of children. Strike One.

But that is by no means the end of it in the industrial action department. The NASUWT is completely opposed (as is its rival, the NUT) to Mr Blunkett's Education Action Zones, which may lead to some private sector involvement in school management. So antagonistic is Mr de Gruchy to EAZs that when the head of a rival union was said to be in discussion about setting one up, along with the CRE, the Nuffield Foundation and the Com-

woulden," he shot back, "undoubtedly demands from my members for industrialeh actioneh if teachers were faced with an extension of the school year." Sure enough, on Wednesday there was an overwhelming vote to take industrial action "to counter any proposal to alter teachers working days or holidays." That's that then. Strike Three.

It is, of course, always possible that I have missed Mr de Gruchy's sunny side – all those criminally underreported speeches when he has commended the

Mr de Gruchy's members may be taking up "industrialeh actioneh with a halo"

commercial Union, Mr de Gruchy commented. "If I had done what [he] had done I would quite rightly be summarily dismissed. For [him] to be conniving at a scheme which could lead to the undermining of pay and conditions is outrageous and deplorable."

Once again, there is a threat of industrial action. Strike Two.

Then three weeks or so ago, Margaret Hodge MP, chair of the House of Commons Education Select Committee said that perhaps the six week summer break was too long, because research indicated that "pupils forgot too much of what they had learned". Now, I have no idea whether this is correct, but I do think it might be worth discussing. But not old Nigel. "There

Government for doing X and parents for doing Y. Instead I invariably see to find him urging the exclusion of rowdy pupils from schools with a consequential insouciance that reminds me of Tom Lehrer's song about the German rocket scientist, who first made V2s and then weapons for the USA: "As long as I send them up, who cares where they come down? That's not my department," says Werner von Braun.

Not to be outdone, the militants in the NUT (whose rivalry with the NAS puts one in mind of the Teamsters versus the Longshoremen, circa 1955) last week voted for a ballot on industrial action if they weren't given a four-day week and a season ticket to Glyndebourne. But the vote was nar-

row, the ballot will be lost and in general Taffy Doug McAvoy, the NUT has a leader capable of arguing that the Government's policies are "a mixed basket ... On balance Labour has done very well."

All this de Gruchyism matters. Not least because it represents itself as the experience of real teachers, when in fact, it isn't. Take, for example, the debate at last week's NUT conference on Mr Blunkett's suggested "literacy hour". Delegate after delegate stood up to equate this imposition to East Germany before 1989. They voted overwhelmingly to reject it.

But in the middle of the debate one Bristol teacher stood up to say that they had implemented such a strategy in her school for two years – and had seen enormous improvement among middle and lower ability children. "I don't know of any school that has started the project that has regretted it," she said.

That was the authentic voice of the teachers that I meet. Much, for instance, is made of the superior status and morale of German teachers. But a friend's daughter who has been through a Rhineland Gymnasium, and is now studying for A-levels in North London, expresses astonishment at the high level of involvement and motivation of British teachers compared to their pampered Teutonic counterparts.

Nothing gains teachers more support in their struggle for resources than the feeling among Mums and Dads that they're doing their best for the children. Likewise, nothing loses it faster than the thought that our kids have become the front-line collateral casualties in a war for union membership.

## How TV-dinners show the decline of all that right-thinkers value



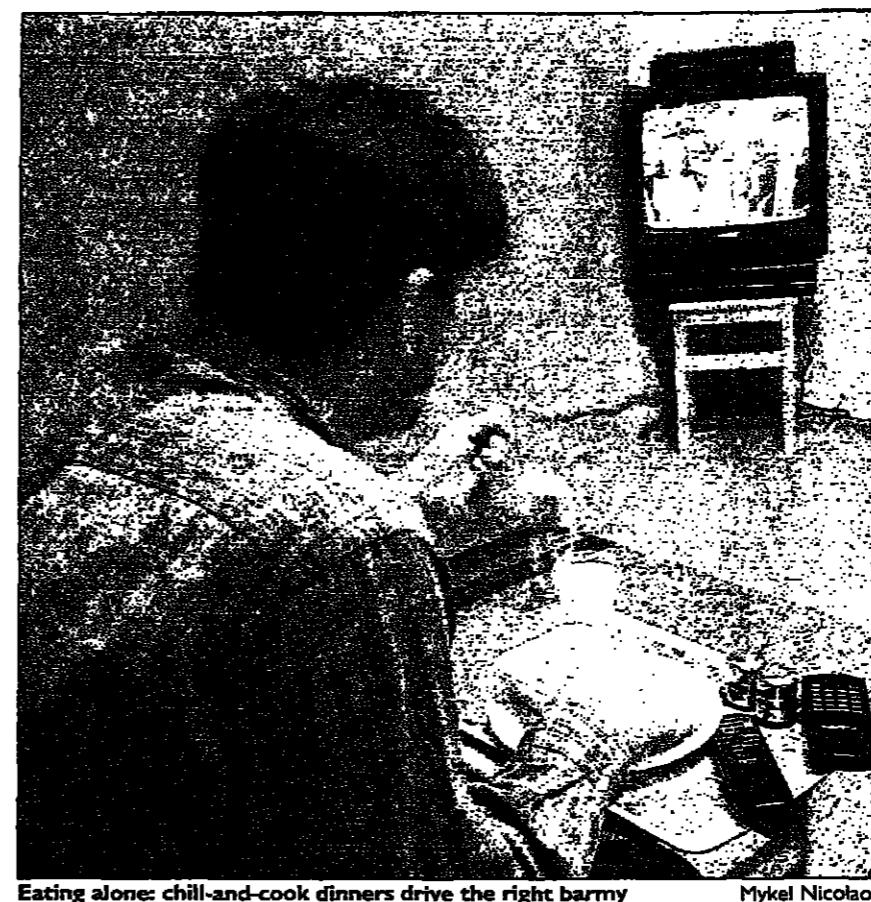
SUZANNE  
MOORE  
SENTIMENTAL  
CRITICISM

Any right-thinking person should be very concerned about the future of the right in this country. As Labour has colonised so much formerly right-wing thinking in the name of the "third way", what us charitable souls wonder will the right be able to hang on to as pure right-wing thought? They may dabble with various libertarian perspectives but even this does not go down well with their ageing constituency. This is something of a shame as even this illustrious administration need a plausible opposition in order to counter its unbearable smugness.

Instead though we have to put up with various missives from that increasingly bizarre "think-tank" the Social Affairs Unit. Its latest effort *Faking It: The Sentimentalisation of Modern Society*, edited by Digby Anderson and Peter Mullen, is an indication of the muddle that currently passes as right-wing thinking. Really this book should be called *Modern Life is Rubbish* but unfortunately that title has already been used by that far superior think tank known as Blur.

The various thinkers gathered together in this book rail against such a variety of targets that it is impossible to see how the right can re-brand themselves, never mind formulate a political programme based on anything other than "the way we were". Their only narrative is the one of return to a mythical past.

So what doesn't the Social Affairs Unit like? Well, it doesn't like child-centred learning, counselling, environmentalism, alternative medicine, the mourning of Diana or the way we eat



Eating alone: chill-and-cook dinners drive the right barmy

leashed by the global free-market required new kinds of workers, some of them female.

In Digby Anderson's own tirade about "the sentimentalisation of civilised eating", he rants against the vegetarians and the microwavers but he is most angry about the role of women in the kitchen. Victorian cook books were, he tells us, full of wifely virtue. The kitchen did not exist for female self-indulgence; instead she must learn to follow rules and practice and perfect recipes. Now western civilisation is clearly in peril because women's magazines tell women how to cook dishes as quickly as possible even allowing them to substitute ingredients of their own. "She is encouraged to lie and cheat, disguising this as that, to cut corners yet present things so her guests will think she has been slaving all day." This goes straight to the guts of modern life. You can't even get your wife to stick to the goddamn recipe.

If a chill-and-cook dinner sends these guys barmy, you can imagine how they feel about more important things. Never mind the detested happy-clapies, what about the feminisation of political discourse, what Mark Steyn calls "a drag-queen travesty of what the woman's movement intended". Steyn is right to question the false empathy that politicians are forced to exude in the name of emotional correctness. Yet what do we mean by the feminisation of politics? Was it Mo Mowlam's touchy-feely style that brokered a peace settlement, or her sheer bloody determination? Or maybe some of both?

Is it necessarily a feminising, therefore emasculating, move for public figures to admit their failures as well as their feelings? I'm afraid my feeling is that these guys should just get out more often. When they see a deeply sentimental culture I see a deeply cynical one, where everything is excused in the name of supposedly distanced irony. We need people to care more not less, to be able to formulate the value judgements that these authors bemoan the lack of.

All of this is enough to make me feel quite nostalgic about the right – didn't they used to be somebody? They could have been contenders. Now they merely look like tired, old men muttering to themselves in the corner hoping that some one out there is listening. Or perhaps I'm just being sentimental and faking some empathy for those who still refuse to understand the meaning of the word.

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## 19/BUSINESS

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FINANCIAL JOURNAL OF THE YEAR

# Pound surges as exports plummet

By Diane Coyle  
Economics Editor

THE POUND jumped on the foreign exchanges yesterday, piling on the agony for exporters even as the British Chambers of Commerce reported that export orders and sales were at their lowest since 1991.

It gained nearly three pence to climb above DM3.05, and nearly a cent against the dollar to reach \$1.69, while the sterling index rose a full point to 108.1.

The yen was weaker across the board yesterday, after it became clear that

Wednesday's G7 meeting had not reached

concrete agreement to support the Japanese currency. In addition, earlier fears in the markets of a rise in German interest rates after today's Bundesbank Council meeting went into retreat.

The warning signs of recession in man-

ufacturing, along with suggestions of slower growth in services, in the influential BCC survey, had little impact on the currency markets. Hawks and doves in the City both found evidence to support their case in the detail of the results.

Confirming other evidence of the weak state of manufacturing in the first few months of this year, the survey reported a fall in home and export orders and sales.

slower employment growth and lower investment intentions. The export figures for manufacturing had only been worse once in the history of the survey.

Small and medium sized businesses were being hit hardest, the Chambers of Commerce said. Deteriorating cash-flow was a particular problem for the smallest.

Manufacturers said pay pressures had not changed, remaining at an uncomfortable level, but lower costs meant few intended to raise the prices they charged during the next few months.

The survey also showed clear evidence that the strong pound is feeding through to service sector firms too. They reported a drop in export orders and deliveries.

Other indicators for services were more robust. Export and home sales and home orders declined slightly but planned employment and investment increased and confidence remained high.

Of most concern to the hawks, recruitment difficulties increased again, matching their 1990 record level. The balance reporting pressure to increase pay settlements rose from 24 per cent to 28 per cent.

Esuke Sakakihara, Japan's "Mr Yen", said the communiqué left open the possibility of a support operation, but Robert Rubin, the US Treasury Secretary, said this had not been discussed.

Mr Sakakihara said: "It is very rare for

the G7 statement to speak about the currency by singling out a certain currency and mentioning that it is not desirable for that currency to have an excessive depreciation."

But Mr Rubin denied that a joint intervention plan had been raised.

there was nothing to suggest that growth in the service sector, which makes up more than two-thirds of the economy, had slowed from its recent rapid pace.

Other City experts predicted rates could go no higher. David Hillier at Barclays Capital said: "The key news is that there are clear signs activity in the service sector has slowed."

This was the BCC's view too. Mr Peters said: "Exporters in both manufacturing and services are now taking a real battering. Cheap imports are adding to the pressure on manufacturers at home, with clear signs of a knock-on effect on the service sector."

The currency markets concluded that the G7 meeting this week had ruled out co-ordinated intervention to support the flagging yen, although some residual caution about the possibility remained.

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## Chancellor calls for new IMF watchdog

By Diane Coyle

IMPROVING the international response to financial crises was the focus of attention for ministers and bankers at the IMF and World Bank meetings in Washington yesterday.

Gordon Brown, Chancellor of the Exchequer, called for the IMF and World Bank to create a new joint department to oversee the financial system in member countries. It should co-operate with national regulators and other bodies such as the Bank for International Settlements, he told a meeting of the Fund's interim, or management, committee.

Mr Brown said greater transparency on the part of individual countries about their financial systems and procedures was also necessary.

"Greater openness in procedures as well as the dissemination of information will provide markets with a better understanding," he said. "This would reduce the likelihood of financial market crises and improve policies."

The Chancellor's call for improvements was backed by a separate meeting of G10 countries - a group of smaller industrialised countries. Its communiqué said the IMF should continue to play a central role in crisis prevention, and supported the need for greater transparency and disclosure.

"Ministers and governors noted that the crisis in Asia had underscored the importance of strengthening financial systems in emerging market economies," it said.

In the aftermath of the Mexican crisis in late 1994 the IMF introduced improvements in its publication of economic statistics, making more information about member economies freely available on the

internet. Some countries have also agreed to the publication of summaries of their annual "Article Four" consultations with the IMF on a voluntary basis.

A consensus in favour of improving financial and banking information as well has emerged during the meetings in Washington this week, but the exact shape any reforms take will emerge only slowly, given the normal pace of change at the Fund. More radical plans to redraw the "international financial architecture" will move at an even more glacial pace.

The IMF is close to producing a code of good practice on fiscal transparency, first proposed by Mr Brown at its annual meeting last September.

The Chancellor said yesterday this should be extended by a code of good practice on monetary and financial policy. He said more countries should be encouraged to publish the results of their discussions with the IMF. The Fund itself should also become more open and accountable.

The IMF has been under fire this week for its lack of accountability, and particularly for failing to take account of the social impact of the policies it has imposed on the troubled South-east Asian countries.

Development organisations have also criticised it for delaying planned debt relief for the world's poorest countries. A new report from Oxfam claims the high-profile debt relief initiative has been a failure, with only three countries likely to have seen any material reduction in their interest payments by the end of this year.

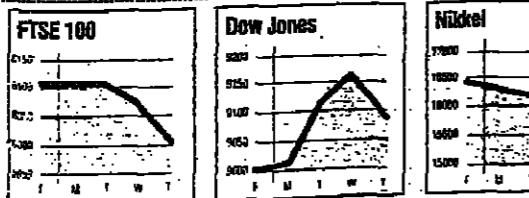
Ministers from developing countries called on Wednesday for the IMF, World Bank and G7 to accelerate the pace of debt relief to those countries which had undertaken tough economic reforms.

### World Bank social trends

Region	1970		1986		1990		1996	
	Infant mortality per 1,000 live births	Under-five mortality per 1,000	Gross primary school enrollment (% of relevant age group)	1980	1986	1980	1986	1990
East Asia and the Pacific	76	59	75	75	80	75	75	75
Europe and Central Asia	-	24	-	30	-	100	-	-
Latin America and the Caribbean	84	53	82	84	84	82	84	87
Middle East and North Africa	134	50	141	63	68	97	77	97
South Asia	135	73	177	182	177	97	107	99
Sub-Saharan Africa	137	91	193	147	80	75	-	-

### Yesterday in the markets

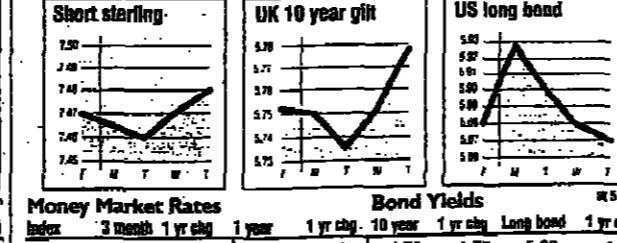
#### STOCK MARKETS



Indices Change % Change (\$/pt) 52 wk high 52 wk low Yield (%)

Index	Class	Change	Change (\$)	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)	
FTSE 100		-72.10	-0.17	6150.50	4280.20	3.35	
FTSE 100		6002.00	-9.20	5562.80	4384.20	2.98	
FTSE 250		5536.80	-0.16	5562.80	4384.20	2.98	
FTSE 350		2880.70	-29.00	1095.70	2110.30	3.28	
FTSE All Share		2607.58	-26.56	2641.40	2182.10	2.87	
FTSE SmallCap		2620.30	-6.20	2641.40	2182.10	2.87	
FTSE Recording		1408.50	-1.50	1115.30	1225.20	3.28	
FTSE AIM		1058.30	0.20	1085.70	956.90	1.07	
Dow Jones		9077.26	-64.52	9152.27	6550.60	1.54	
Nikkei		15863.77	-415.53	2029.70	14485.21	0.98	
Smith		207.50	11.00	5.60	16820.31	7009.13	3.30
Hang Seng		11197.78	-183.28	-1.61	16820.31	7009.13	3.30
Dax		5324.14	-84.33	-1.19	5411.07	3225.01	1.52

#### INTEREST RATES

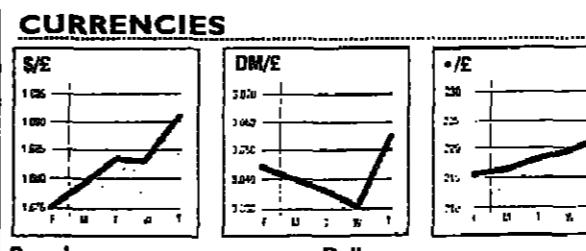


Index	3 month	1 year	10 year	1 yr ago	Long bond	1 yr ago
UK	7.52	1.10	5.76	-1.76	5.69	-1.99
US	5.69	-0.16	5.64	-0.55	5.58	-1.31
Japan	0.67	0.13	0.69	0.21	1.82	-0.57
Germany	3.65	0.42	3.96	0.57	4.87	-0.98
					5.41	-1.24

#### MAIN PRICE CHANGES

Rises	Price up	Chg	Chg %	Falls	Price up	Chg	Chg %
First Leisure	367.00	30.00	8.50	Allegis Group	72.50	-7.00	-8.31
Sage Group	1205.00	65.00	5.50	Amico	475.00	36.50	7.74
Smith	207.50	11.00	5.60	Lloyd TSB Group	995.00	48.00	8.40
Gen Cable	4165.00	8.00	0.19	HSBC Holdings	1787.00	-95.00	-5.05

#### CURRENCIES



Index	at 5pm	Chg	Chg %	Yr Ago	Wk Ago	Mon Ago
Dollar	1.6915	+0.80c	0.6156	1.6244	-0.28p	0.6156
D-Mark	3.0553	+2.54c	2.8119	3.0755	+0.78p	1.7284
Yen	221.91	+13.72	204.48	131.25	+1.65	125.88
S Index	107.10	+0.00	99.70	1		

## Blackpool's tower a target

By Nigel Cope  
City Correspondent

SOME of Britain's best-known seaside attractions such as the Blackpool Tower and Eastbourne pier could be sold under plans being considered by First Leisure, the bingo to bars leisure group led by Michael Grade.

The company said yesterday that it had received a number of unsolicited approaches for its resorts division which includes the two landmark tourist attractions as well as Llandudno pier in north Wales.

First Leisure stressed that the talks are at an early stage and that no firm offers have been tabled. Analysts suggested the division could fetch around £120m. They said buyers could include venture capital groups or a management buy-out.

The Blackpool Tower was built over a century ago and modelled on the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Eastbourne pier opened in 1886 and was recently refurbished to include a new wine bar, restaurant and amusement area.

First Leisure acquired the Tower and the other attractions when it bought the resorts division 16 years ago but it is thought the company now wants to concentrate on nightclubs, health

clubs and bowling. It has already disposed of its bingo division after a £38m management buy-out three months ago.

There has been speculation that the decision to consider selling the resorts is linked to the Labour Party dropping the Winter Gardens as a conference venue in favour of Brighton.

More than a million people visit Blackpool Tower every year and it boasts a top 10 popularity among Britain's fee-paying attractions. It contains themed areas such as insect exhibition Bugworld, an aquarium and model dinosaurs and the famous ballroom complete with organ in the basement.

First Leisure's statement helped to boost the company's share price by 30p to 367p. The stock was given further lift when Dresden Kleinwort Benson upgraded its recommendation on the shares to 'buy'.

First Leisure has been the subject of intense criticism in recent weeks over a controversial pay package that could see Mr Grade earn £4.5m over four years. The pay deal prompted almost 45 per cent of shareholders to vote against the resolution of three non-executive directors. Two new non-executives are to be appointed to placate investors.

## Safeway rolls out a better loyalty card

By Nigel Cope  
City Correspondent

SAFEWAY, the supermarket group which has been losing ground to its rivals, increased the stakes in the loyalty card battle yesterday when it unveiled a £20m package of improvements to its ABC card.

Shoppers spending upwards of £160 a month at Safeway will now be entitled to double points on their ABC card and those spending over £240 will qualify for triple points the following month.

Safeway said the initiative would increase incentives for shoppers to remain loyal and use the stores for their main shop rather than for top-up purchases. It said the average

family spends more than £60 a week on groceries, meaning most families stood to benefit from the higher rewards if they shopped regularly at the store.

"We're breaking ranks as we want to make it even more re-

warding for customers to spend more with Safeway - so the more you spend, the higher the reward," said chief executive Colin Smith.

Safeway plans to support the initiative with a big television

and press campaign. Shoppers currently get one point for every pound spent at Safeway. They can redeem their points through discounts on purchases, free products, in-store services, family offers or

donations to charity.

Analysts said the move showed Safeway was still striving to revive sales momentum, which has not matched the industry trend. Tesco and Sainsbury's also operate loyalty

cards though Asda has decided not to launch one nationally.

Safeway's recent problems

have made it the subject of bid-

speculation with Asda seen as

the most likely bidder. Safeway

shares were unchanged at 364p

## THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

EDITED BY PETER THAL LARSEN

### Premier is still struggling

FOR a lesson in how acquisitions can go wrong, look no further than Premier Farnell. Back in 1996, Farnell, which was then an electronic components distributor with an enviable track record, paid £1.8bn for Premier, a similar business in the US. Two years and two profit warnings later Premier Farnell, as the business is now called, is worth just £1bn.

This is value destruction on a heroic scale and the man responsible - chief executive Howard Poulson - was rightly pushed out last January. What's more, the company is still destroying value. By its own admission, Premier Farnell currently earns just half the return on equity it needs to cover its cost of capital, which is about 11 per cent.

But, as the investment gurus are fond of pointing out, the past is no guide to the future and every share is worth buying if it's cheap enough. The question for investors is whether Premier Farnell is a recovery story waiting to happen.

On the evidence of yesterday's full year results, which showed pre-tax profits in line with the company's January forecast of £139m, there is still plenty of reason to be cautious. Growth figures are pedestrian: adjusted for currencies and various other one-off items, sales grew by a pedestrian 0 per cent. Spending on computer systems and start-up costs for new catalogues meant that profit growth was not much better.

Despite the lavish promises made at the time of the merger, of the benefits that could be squeezed from cross-selling the two companies' product ranges, Premier Farnell admits that there is still a lot to be done. And Morton Mandel, the Premier boss who made a packet from the takeover and is running the merged company until a new chief executive is found, is reluctant to promise any tangible benefits in the near future.

So, for the time being, Premier Farnell will manage no more than pedestrian growth. Analysts are pencilling in profit figures of just £145m, placing the shares, which fell 1p to 368p yesterday, on a forward p/e ratio of about 14. Given the continuing risks, steer clear.

### Albert Fisher in a mire

STEPHEN WALLS may have stepped down to become non-executive chairman at Albert Fisher, the poorly performing fruit and vegetable group, but

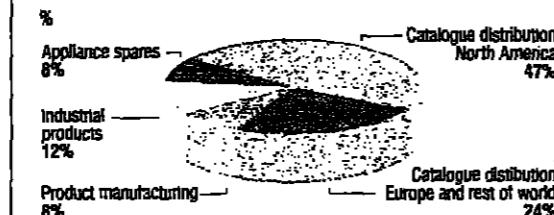
### Premier Farnell: At a glance

Market value: £999m, share price 368 (-1p)

#### Five-year record 1994 1995 1996 1997 1998

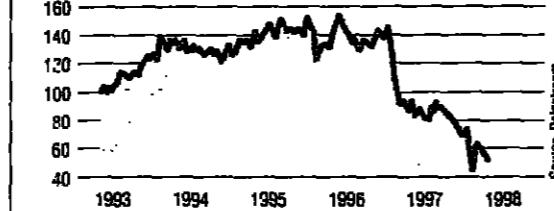
Turnover (£m)	320	514	539	983	744
Pre-tax profits (£m)	49	59	111	173	139
Earnings per share (p)	23.2	27.3	54.8	38.5	25.3
Dividends per share (p)	7.0	8.6	10.3	12.0	12.9

#### Turnover %



#### Premier Farnell vs FT Allshare

rebased, April 1993 = 100



the stock market will not remember him kindly. After much bluster and promises to move the group away from the commodity end of the business, he leaves the company with a series of low-margin businesses, still at the risk of the weather and crop disease.

The shares have been an appalling investment. In the past year they have underperformed the market by 50 per cent. Last year a mystery bidder came and went and a plan to sell the problematic seafood operations fell through.

Shareholders are left with a mess. The group recorded a pre-tax loss of £23m after exceptional charges of £35m in the six months to February. Management now intends to keep most of the seafood operations, though the US seafood interests will be sold.

The most surprising aspect of yesterday's results was the decision to maintain the dividend. A cut had been expected and is already factored into the share price so management is not getting any credit for its actions. Albert Fisher is now paying out more in dividends than it is earning and one can only imagine that the payout will be cut later in the year.

Neil England, who joined as chief executive last year, wants to improve margins and build leading businesses in sectors such as fresh fruit, prepared salads and sauces. But this sounds horribly familiar. Chiquita, the American food group that was rumoured to have been the mystery bidder last year, may come knocking again. The shares - down 1.25p to 28.25p - are certainly cheaper this time.

### Caverdale bikes ahead

IT HAS been a landmark year for Caverdale, the motors and accessories group. It sold its motor dealerships to Quickfit for £6m in November and returned £10m to shareholders. With the car dealerships gone the company is a much smaller entity focused on its industrial products and leisure businesses which it says offer higher margins and greater growth opportunities.

This is borne out by last year's full year results which show operating profits on continuing operations rising by 76 per cent to £3m.

The industrial products business essentially sells industrial parts to the motor trade, local authorities and farmers. It's not a business to set the blood racing, but is meant to provide the ballast to Caverdale's real growth area - the sale of motorcycle and bicycle accessories.

Caverdale has four motorcycle accessory stores and plans a further 10 this year. It already has a successful mail order operation. Completing the picture is a Raleigh bicycle and parts distributor acquired in November, and the recently acquired XM Group which makes and distributes marine products.

The shares closed up 4p yesterday at 14.5p. On full year profit forecasts of £5m the shares trade on a forward rating of 13. About right.

The group's annual report also reveals that Mike Vincent,

who resigned as a director of fast September, received a payoff of £22,000. He also made a profit of £272,000 from selling share options.

John Grant, Asco's new chief

## Liffe members vote on changes

By Lea Patterson

THE 220 members of Liffe, London's financial futures and options exchange, met last night to vote on plans to cut down the exchange's unwieldy board and refocus its much criticised management.

One Liffe trader said: "A number of people - mainly the institutions - saw the electronic screen trading coming. But Liffe's unwieldy board, together with the vested interests of certain parts of the membership, made it impossible for us to make any changes."

Founded in 1982, Liffe quickly grew to become the second largest futures exchange in the world. For years, Liffe, which enthusiastically embraced the "open outcry" trading methods pioneered in Chicago, was widely regarded as the cutting edge of the world's financial exchanges. "It was innovative and imaginative - a great place to be part of," said one Liffe trader.

Over the last year, though, things have taken a marked turn for the worse. Liffe has lost market share at a remarkable rate to the Deutsche Terminbörse (DTB), Germany's rival exchange which has launched an aggressive and audacious attack on Liffe. In a matter of months, the DTB cut Liffe's share of the prestigious German Bund futures market by more than half. At the moment, the DTB has a 70 per cent share of the Bund, and its share is rising all the time. It marks a dramatic reversal of fortunes for the two exchanges. Only a year ago Liffe had a 70 per cent share of trade in the Bund. DTB's share was 30 per cent.

Liffe's members have been up in arms at what they regard as the failure of the exchange's management to respond to competition from DTB's electronic screen-based system. Following sustained criticism from its membership over the last few months, Liffe's board finally came up with a series of proposals designed to safeguard the exchange's future.

Liffe members are to vote on these proposals at two egms. The first, held last night, covers the structure of the board. Liffe is proposing a reduction in the number of board members - currently there are 24 - and the appointment of a full-time chairman. Jack Wigglesworth, the current part-time chairman, is expected to stand down next month.

At the second egm, which will be held next month, Liffe members will discuss the thorny issue of its ownership structure, which could lead to a radical rethink of Liffe's mutual status. The board is also proposing that the exchange introduce electronic trading. It is intended the electronic system will run in parallel with the traditional open outcry method.

Liffe members attribute the exchange's recent decline to a combination of factors, including the inflexibility of the management, the initial reluctance of Liffe to embrace electronic trading and vested interests that lie with London's futures exchange.

One Liffe trader said: "A number of people - mainly the institutions - saw the electronic screen trading coming. But Liffe's unwieldy board, together with the vested interests of certain parts of the membership, made it impossible for us to make any changes."

The vested interests referred to were members of the "local" community - individuals who speculate on Liffe with their own money. Locals currently account for around 30 per cent of Liffe's volumes.

One trader with a major institution said many local traders were desperate to maintain open outcry: "They [the locals] perceive that with open outcry they have an advantage over traders elsewhere in the world."

"It is certainly the case that most locals will be staying with open outcry for as long as possible," admitted one local trader.

Not all locals, though, are supporters of the status quo. A few prominent locals have been among the most vociferous critics of the exchange. David Matimoe, a veteran open outcry trader recently honoured by Liffe for the volume of Bunds he traded at the exchange, is among those who have switched sides and now trades with the DTB.

David Kyle, the Liffe board member who resigned last month in a dispute over members' fees, has also been a fierce critic of the management. At the time of his

resignation, he said: "The chairman and chief executive remind me of the captain and chief engineer on the *Titanic* thinking their ship is unsinkable. Gentlemen, the iceberg is just around the corner."

But it is wrong to say Liffe has been completely defeated by the Germans. Its open outcry system still has a significant advantage over electronic dealing when it comes to the more complex transactions such as the Euromarket, now the most popular contract at Liffe.

One trader explained: "There are only four trading strategies you can use with a Bund. Other contracts, such as the Euromarket, are far more complex. You need an incredibly sophisticated electronic system if a trader is going to be able to do as many things with the screens as he can with open outcry."

Recent market share figures seem to bear testimony to Liffe's advantage in these more complex transactions. Last month Liffe's volume of trades in three month Euromarket contracts was more than 100 times greater than DTB's.

If Liffe is to survive, according to the trader, the board needs to be slimmed down, it needs to adopt electronic trading and it needs to change its membership structure. Although many traders approve of the proposals on board structure and electronic trading, a significant proportion feel the management has not gone far enough.

In particular, numerous members believe the exchange must consider a merger - possibly with arch-rival DTB - if it is to remain a significant player in the world's financial markets. So far, Liffe has ruled out such a move.

**Open outcry:** The trading methods at Liffe give it an advantage with some contracts, but electronic trading looks likely to be introduced as well

### Aegis stake for sale

VENTURE capital groups and family shareholders have put a 42.5 per cent stake in Aegis, the media buyer, up for sale. The company said Warburg, Pincus Investors, Electra Private Equity Partners and the Gross family will sell up to 353 million shares.

Aegis also said it started 1998 with "good momentum", and that results in the first two months are running ahead of 1997 and ahead of objectives. Cazenove & Co is acting as lead manager and sole book runner, while Hoare Govett Corporate Finance Limited is acting as co-lead manager for the offering.

### Wace sells

WACE, the troubled printing group, is selling four of its divisions to its management in a £53m deal backed by Electra Fleming, the venture capitalists. The buy-out team is being led by Brian Dudley, formerly chief executive of Regus and the new group is planning to make further acquisitions in the industry. Together, the four

recent operating profits of £4.2m on sales of £78.2m. Wace unveiled a loss of £10.3m for 1997 compared with a profit of £11.9m in the previous year.

### El Nino strikes

ALBERT FISHER, the underperforming fruit and vegetable group that was the subject of an aborted takeover approach last year, has reported half year pre-tax losses of £23m after £35m of exceptional charges. These included £4m of fees related to the failed sale of the seafood business and a £17m goodwill write off relating to the Roem Dutch seafood operations. The strong pound and the effects of the El Nino weather phenomenon affected trading. However, the company said it expects a better performance in the second half.

### FII steps west

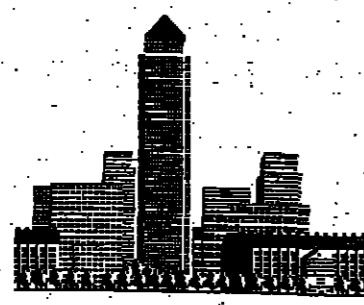
FII, the footwear group which supplies Marks & Spencer, is closing down its factory in Northampton with the loss of 110 jobs. Continued pressure on prices which has eroded margins has forced the group to move production to Bridgend in Wales.

## Boardroom salaries are booming

FRESH evidence emerged yesterday that boardroom salaries are booming after several groups revealed a sharp rise in directors' pay packets last year.

Howard Dyer, chairman of Asco Holdings, the engineer, saw his total pay rise more than 65 per cent last year

## Granada can't keep a foot in both TV camps



**OUTLOOK**  
ON GERRY  
ROBINSON'S  
UNCOMFORTABLE  
POSITION WITH  
BSKYB AND BDB,  
DIFFICULT TIMES FOR  
MFI, AND THE  
FRENCH BID FOR  
MORE GROUP

RIDING two horses at the same time is never easy. When they both happen to be in the self-obsessed, ego-driven world of TV and media, it gets that much more difficult still. Nonetheless, Gerry Robinson, chairman of Granada, reckons he can keep up the circus act a while longer yet.

As a major shareholder and chairman of the board, he still has one foot firmly planted on the back of the ageing but still high-performance BSkyB. The other foot is meanwhile planted equally firmly on the back of that promising young thoroughbred, British Digital Broadcasting, where he is a 50/50 shareholder with Carlton.

In theory, the two should be getting along just fine. Sky has a powerful interest in BDB's future success through a five year programming agreement, while BDB admits that without this programming, it won't have much of a product to launch on its digital terrestrial platform this autumn. For the time being, then, the two are irrevocably harnessed together at the head.

Despite this, the wits seem to be flying between the two like confetti. First Sky sued Carlton for failure to pay up agreed compensation for its equity in BDB. Meanwhile, Michael Green of Carlton has been conducting a very public row with his opposite number at Sky, Mark Booth, about who is going to be liable for the extra costs of running Sky's premier football league rights across BDB's terrestrial platform.

Finally we were yesterday subjected to the bizarre spectacle of Sky suing BDB over the set-top boxes which will allow customer access to BDB's channels. In

essence Mr Robinson has sued himself. Presumably all this is never going to come to court. The hurried and somewhat embarrassed way in which arrangements were being made last night for the two sides to sit down and talk it all out indicates that Granada is belatedly trying to knock heads together.

Even so, it is worth asking what lies behind this public scrap, and further, whether given all this bad blood, Granada can hope to continue to stay astride both steeds. At the insistence of the Government, the set-top boxes being used by the three digital platforms - satellite, terrestrial and cable - to unscramble the signal are meant to be fully compatible one with another, the point being that the consumer who wants more than one platform won't have to buy more than one box. This stipulation was contractually reinforced by Sky when it signed its programming agreement with BDB.

Now BDB is planning to go live with a box which although largely compatible seems not to be wholly so. With a bit of luck it should be capable of unscrambling Sky's digital channels (so in that sense it won't be like the famous battle to the death between the rival video technologies of Betamax and VHS), but it will not be able to carry Sky's electronic programme guide, allowing the consumer to navigate his way around the 200 planned channels. Foul, cries Sky. This may look like a storm in a tea cup, but there is a real and significant sub-text. If BDB works out, it will one day provide serious head-to-head competition for Sky, for audience and rights alike.

Long-term, then, it is in Sky's interests to see BDB fail. Certainly there is no harm in the meantime, by requiring it to upgrade its box to full compatibility. Some faint valuations are already being put on BDB in the City, but its success is by no means assured. While that remains the case, it plainly makes sense for Granada to knock its bets by riding both horses. But for how much longer will that be possible? The situation is already uncomfortable. One or other, Sky or BDB, is eventually going to let Granada where to get off.

### Some retail flair needed at MFI

THESE ARE difficult times for MFI, the company whose self-assembly furniture has outwitted many a DIY enthusiast. The kitchens and bedrooms group treated investors to a profits warning last month, now the group's major investors are pruning their stakes and getting restless about the board's stewardship.

A minor boardroom reshuffle last week has failed to satisfy disgruntled institutions, and it is becoming apparent that only the head of either the chairman Derek Hunt, or his chief executive John Randall, or both, will do.

Investors certainly have a right to be angry. Messrs Hunt and Randall bought MFI from Asda in a management buy-out in 1987, and made a big turn when they brought the company back to the market in 1992. The flotation priced the shares

at 115p each. Now they are worth just 93p, valuing the company at only £550m. It is a dismal story.

MFI has a strong market position in kitchens - more than 10 per cent - but its franchise has been eroded by cheap and cheerful operators like Ikea. Management responded by converting stores to the Homeworks format, which includes more soft furnishings, pots and pans and so on. Unfortunately, costs have been rising as fast as sales and some lines, such as upholstery, are now having to be taken out. A new warehouse system has resulted in some doubling up in costs and a degree of disruption. And on top of this the market has turned against retailers of big ticket items.

There are other issues too. One is vertical integration. MFI makes much of the supposed virtues of being both a manufacturer and a retailer but doesn't seem to be able to reap the benefits. Few retailers manage to combine the two disciplines effectively. Just ask Laura Ashley and British Shorthair. However, MFI cannot demerit its Hygena manufacturing division as it too closely integrated. Hygena doesn't make kitchens for anyone else.

But perhaps management is the key here. Derek Hunt, a former policeman, joined MFI in 1972, while John Randall followed in 1978. Like the former Argos team, they have been there too long. Investors are right to wonder whether new blood and an injection of retail flair might breathe new life into a format that needs it badly. A good chairman, like a good footballer, always knows when to

hang up his boots. Unfortunately, Mr Hunt seems to be taking his time in getting the message.

### Rearranging the street furniture

JEAN-FRANCOIS Decaux may need all the free bus posters and superiors he can muster to get his £475m bid for More Group through the Office of Fair Trading. More Group is one of Britain's largest outdoor (or poster) advertising companies with about 20 per cent of the market. Mr Decaux is big in France, but he's got just 3 per cent of the market here. So on the face of it, there's not much of a case to answer.

The question is whether poster advertising on "street furniture" (bus stops to you and me), constitutes a separate and distinct market. Here, the French pretender has a much higher share. Together with More Group, it would be overwhelming, at more than 90 per cent. Mr Decaux insists that these are not separate markets. He may be right about this but he wouldn't be saying the same thing back home in France, where big advertising hoardings are banned from all city centres. The effect is to confine the market for outdoor advertising in city centres to street furniture. For the time being, there's no such distinction in Britain, but who knows, those obliging chaps in Brussels might eventually be prevailed upon to harmonise the rest of Europe with French practice on this front too. Crafty stuff.

## Evidence against banks irrefutable, says lawyer

By Lea Paterson

tactics of intimidation to prevent recovery of assets and deposits.

A Barclays spokesperson has said the bank believes Mr Portman's claims are "completely without foundation". UBS has also denied the claims.

On March 19, Mr Portman issued a \$500bn (£300bn) writ against UBS, alleging client deposit fraud and related civil rights abuses. On March 27, a similar claim was filed against Barclays Bank. Mr Portman said in his letter:

Mr Portman has sent copies of his letter to Bill Clinton, the US President, and Alan Greenspan, chairman of the US Federal Reserve.

## Rivals try to settle digital TV dispute

By Peter Thal Larsen

BRITISH Sky Broadcasting and British Digital Broadcasting, the rival television groups, are to meet today in an attempt to resolve a row over the compatibility of the decoders required to receive their digital television services.

The meeting, which is understood to have been requested by BDB, will give the two companies an opportunity to agree common technical standards for their decoders, known as set-top boxes.

BSkyB, which will start broadcasting 200 digital channels via satellite in June, has issued a writ against BDB, which is planning to launch a 30-channel service in the autumn. The writ claims that BDB's set-top box is not compatible with BSkyB's box, breaking an agreement between the two companies.

BSkyB and BDB have agreed that the boxes should be "inter-operable" - that viewers should be able to receive either service regardless of which box they buy. However, the two companies disagree over

whether the boxes are interoperable. While BSkyB argues that they are, BDB claims that they only need a few technical adjustments.

"All that is required is for BSkyB to agree to co-operate to finalise the technical arrangements," said Nigel Walmsley, a BDB director.

"BSkyB should compete in the marketplace, not in the courts."

But Mark Booth, BSkyB's chief executive, said: "We simply want to ensure that the boxes have equal ability to access digital television services."

Outlook, this page

## TSB row simmers on

By Lea Paterson

THE simmering row between Lloyds TSB, the UK's largest bank, and the TSB Hill Samuel Action group over the fate of the TSB's surplus pension fund is set to go all the way to the House of Commons.

Talks between the two sides broke down yesterday after a "very disappointing" meeting between Lloyds' management and the lobby group. A full House of Commons debate on the Bill which could finally put the seal on the merger of Lloyds and TSB now seems inevitable.

Gerald Howarth, one of three MPs who formally opposed

the Bill last February after the TSB Hill Samuel Action Group voiced concerns over the treatment of the TSB pension fund and the TSB's surplus pension fund which they made no progress whatsoever.

"I am very disappointed, especially after the encouraging meeting that Howard Flight [another MP who has blocked the Bill] had with Mike Fairey [deputy chief executive of Lloyds] last month."

Unless MPs withdraw their formal objections to the Bill, it will be debated in the House of Commons next Monday.

A Lloyds spokesperson also called the meeting "disap-

pointing". She said Lloyds had been hoping the group would produce hard evidence to support some of its claims. The group has claimed hundreds of former TSB pensioners have inadequate pension arrangements and are living on income support. However, no such evidence was forthcoming, the spokesperson said.

The TSB Hill Samuel Action Group has said it aims to "correct unfair and inequitable treatment that we suspect has taken place in the past in respect of a significant number of pensioners".

Lloyds has denied the merger will affect TSB pension fund arrangements in any way.

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**Rosie Boycott,**  
Editor, *The Independent* and *The Independent on Sunday*

**David Brown,**  
Chairman, Motorola Ltd and Chair,  
UFI Design and Implementation Advisory Group

**Josh Hillman,**  
Institute for Public Policy Research

**Simon Sperry,**  
Chief Executive, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

**Diana Warwick,**  
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# Just like any other marriage, monetary union needs tolerance



DAVID MACKIE  
ON THE  
LESSONS OF  
THE UK'S  
REGIONS FOR  
THE SUCCESS  
OF EMU

LIKE marriage, European economic and monetary union is supposed to be forever. So, with divorce rates on the rise, it is only natural to ask what will make this particular union last? While economists may not have much to say about most marriages, they do have a lot of advice for the 11 countries about to walk down the Euro aisle.

Unfortunately, not all of this advice is likely to prove helpful. Moreover, economists rarely mention the most important glue that will hold Euro participants together in wedlock.

Most economists argue that to make Euro last, Europe needs a more flexible labour market and a more centralised tax and benefit system. Together, so the argument goes, these will limit the regional tensions that would otherwise arise when the freedom to set monetary policy on the basis of local conditions is given up.

However, it is far from clear that the first will be all that helpful and the second is probably not necessary.

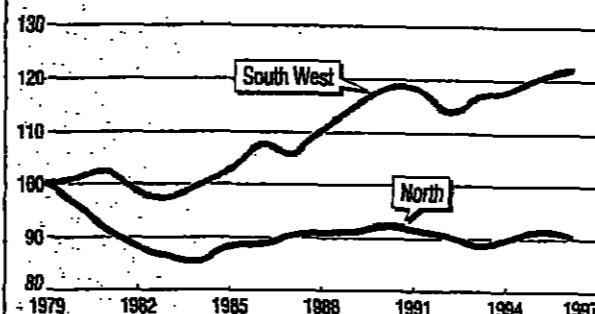
To understand how Euro will work, consider an already-existing monetary union that has been functioning reasonably well for almost 300 years—the United Kingdom. If you look at the UK as a small monetary union, it is clear that regional divergences are a pervasive feature of the system.

Some regions prosper, while others do not. And these divergences—which are evident in regional income levels and unemployment rates—can persist for extended periods of time, even in a monetary union with a flexible labour market and a highly centralised tax and benefit system.

So how does the UK monetary union work? Let's consider the relative performance of two UK regions during the 1980s—the North and the South-west.

The early 1980s recession hit these two regions very differently. From 1979 to 1983, employment in the North fell by 15 per cent, while in the South-west it fell by only 3 per cent.

## Employment in two UK regions rebased 1979=100



In the subsequent business cycle expansion, which lasted through to 1990, employment in the North rose by 8 per cent, while in the South-west it rose by 21 per cent.

Here we have two regions whose fortunes diverged sharply during the 1980s. However, in a monetary union, there is only one central bank, with only one interest rate to set. While the Bank of England may have wanted to set a lower interest rate in the North than in the South-west, it was unable to do so.

So how did the UK monetary union adjust to these regional divergences? The economists' textbook model argues that workers should flow from the relatively depressed region to the relatively prosperous one, while capital should flow in the opposite direction. This, in theory, should restore regional fortunes.

Well, what happened in practice? Indeed, workers did leave the depressed North and move to the prosperous South-west. But while this migration eased labour shortages in the South-west and reduced unemployment in the North, it exacerbated the divergences in demand between the two regions.

Workers and their families who moved to the South-west purchased houses, had their hair cut, went to restaurants, all of which added to an already buoyant regional economy. The demand for such services fell in the North.

Moreover, capital flowed in

the same direction as workers. Instead of capital flowing to the North—where new factories would generate work for the unemployed—it flowed to the South-west, and the new jobs created made the South-west labour market even tighter.

UK experience demonstrates that success usually breeds success. A relatively prosperous region tends to become even more prosperous, while a relatively depressed region tends to become even more depressed.

A flexible labour market and mobile capital did not help resolve the regional imbalances which developed in the UK in the 1980s. People in the South-west got relatively richer, while those in the North got relatively poorer.

The lesson for Euro is that greater labour market flexibility will not necessarily restore regional fortunes. Labour market reforms, while they may be desirable for other reasons, are not a substitute for an independent monetary policy.

Of course, at this point, the tax and benefit system stepped in to limit the divergence in incomes between the North and the South-west. More taxes were paid in the South-west and more social benefits were paid in the North. This was obviously an important safety valve, limiting the build-up of regional tensions.

But, even after the tax and benefit system had done its work, the relative prosperity of households in the South-west was considerably higher at the

end of the 1980s than at the beginning.

If a well-functioning monetary union like the UK needs a centralised tax and benefit system to ease regional tensions, it is natural to ask whether Euro needs a similar safety valve. Somewhat surprisingly, the answer is no.

The big European countries have both prosperous and depressed regions within their borders. Over time, prosperous regions across Europe tend to become more prosperous together—partly because they share the same industries—while the depressed regions tend to remain depressed together.

Consider, for example, a slump in the car market. In the UK monetary union, this would depress the North relative to the South-west. But in Euro, Germany, France, Italy, and Spain would all be affected by a slump in the car market because they each have a car producing region. To the extent that regional transfers of taxes and benefits need to take place within Euro, these will tend to be within each country rather than from one country to another. And the existing fiscal systems are able to do just that.

So, if labour flexibility is likely to prove unhelpful, and a centralised tax and benefit system is unnecessary, what will be the glue that holds the Euro marriage together? Quite simply, it is tolerance. The UK monetary union has held together for 300 years not because all regional divergences have been ironed out, but rather because regional divergences have been accepted as part of what it means to be a single nation.

This, more than anything, highlights the political nature of Euro. It may or may not deliver economic benefits, but it will only last if there is a high degree of political integration.

At the end of the day, tolerance is the glue that will hold Euro together, as it is in any other marriage.

David Mackie is UK economist at JP Morgan.

## PEOPLE & BUSINESS

JOHN WILLCOCK



LORD SWAYTHLING retired from his manifold business and charitable activities yesterday a few months earlier than his 70th birthday, on 6 August, due to ill health. The Eton and Cambridge educated Lord has certainly had a varied career.

He is currently chairman of Rothmans International, a post he has held for the last 10 years. He is also a director of Chelsfield, Eddie Bernard's property group, and a chairman of the trustees of the Heather Trust for the Arts.

The arts job has entailed Lord Swaythling attempting to rehouse the Gilbert Collection of decorative arts in the south wing of Somerset House, the vast Georgian building on the Thames's north bank which used to be completely filled with civil servants working for the Inland Revenue. Lord Swaythling says the pace of the move has not been helped by the present Government, which when it comes to the arts is as mean as the Tories'.

Mr Bernard publicly thanked Lord Swaythling for his help yesterday, saying: "Lord Swaythling joined the board of Chelsfield prior to the company's flotation. We shall be losing his wise counsel, honed by a long and distinguished business career."

That career has included stints at Samuel Montagu, Orion Bank and J Rothschild Holdings. Lord Swaythling is also handing over the chairmanship of Woburn Golf & Country Club to Rupert Hambro.

Lord Swaythling will be able to indulge his passion for horseracing in his retirement. He still keeps a number of horses in training, and he has served as a steward at Newmarket.

BT HAS moved swiftly to fill the space created by the departure of Bert Roberts, chairman of MCI, who resigned from the BT board after WorldCom snuffed the American phone company.

Coincidentally BT has also had to replace Birgit Breuer, the head of Germany's Expo2000 project, and the former head of the privatisation agency for eastern Germany.

The two new bugs joining Sir Iain Vallance are Helen Alexander, chief executive of The Economist Group, and Neville Isdell, chairman of Tracer Petroleum Corporation and of Lloyd's Pension Fund.

man and chief executive designate of Coca-Cola Beverages.

BAGPIPE-PLAYING company restructure Murdoch McKillop is just starting his year's tenure as president of the Society of Practitioners of Insolvency (SPI). Mr Murdoch, 50, is head of worldwide corporate recovery services at Arthur Andersen, where he has dealt with corporate basket cases as diverse as Robert Maxwell's private companies, Leyland Daf, Ferranti International and Coal Investments plc.

At the moment Mr Murdoch is in Thailand as one of the many British insolvency practitioners bringing their skills in company rescue to bear on the financial crisis in Asia.

A colleague of his tells me that Mr Murdoch's "theme" in his year of office will be persuading creditors what good value British insolvency practitioners are, in terms of rescuing businesses and recovering assets from bust companies. All I can say, Mr Murdoch, is best of luck with that one.

I'm also told there's nothing Mr Murdoch likes better than sailing off the west coast of his native Scotland. The colleague tells me: "With modern technology he is never entirely cut off from the world but he claims that solving problems while under full sail off Ardnamurchan Point is much more fun than from behind a desk."

FORMER Tory Ministers just love working for energy companies. Malcolm Rifkind and Timothy Eggar already have directorships at oil companies. Now Peter Viggers MP, former Minister for Trade and Industry in Northern Ireland, has joined Emerald Energy as a non-exec.

Mr Viggers, 60, is no virgin as far as industry is concerned. Having trained as a solicitor, he was a director of Premier Consolidated Oilfields from 1972 to 1986. He is currently chairman of Tracer Petroleum Corporation and of Lloyd's Pension Fund.

YOU WOULD have to be a pretty brave man to join a Japanese bank at the moment, what with the continuing crisis in Japan's financial sector. Unless you work for UBS, that is.

Dr Paul Chertkow, head of global currency strategy since 1992 at UBS, has been snapped up by Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi. He will start as the bank's head of global currency research next month, while his former colleagues continue to grapple with the "merger" with SBC.

I HEREBY award first prize for most surreal press release of the week to this effort: "Rodenstock UK, who's parent company is based in Munich, the City of Optics, has invited opticians from all around the country to write a 50 word story associated with horses. These stories will then be judged by the author Fay Weldon."

Don't ask what it's about. Life is too short. And try this book blurb for size: "If we wanted a metaphor we might call this book a fat-free diet for saturated executives". The book is *Driving Change: How the best companies are preparing for the 21st century*, by Jerry Yoram Wind and Jeremy Main, to be published in May. I think I'm going to the pub to get saturated ...

### Foreign Exchange Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1,020	1,000	Oman	0.6153	1,615.30
Australia	1,328	1,405	Pakistan	74.25	4,423.00
Brunei	1,420	1,420	Poland	3,470	3,470.00
Canada	5,750	5,750	Portugal	5,718	4,420.00
Egypt	5,702	3,4044	Russia	0.6051	1,615.30
Hungary	5,722	2,113	Russia	0.6051	1,615.30
India	5,722	2,113	Russia	0.6051	1,615.30
Indonesia	12,081	7,920	Russia	0.6051	1,615.30
Kuwait	1,095	1,095	Russia	0.6051	1,615.30
Nigeria	14,071	8,2350	Russia	0.6051	1,615.30

### Other Spot Rates

Country	Sterling	Dollar	Country	Sterling	Dollar
Argentina	1,020	1,000	Oman	0.6153	1,615.30
Australia	1,328	1,405	Pakistan	74.25	4,423.00
Brunei	1,420	1,420	Poland	3,470	3,470.00
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Nigeria	14,071	8,2350	Russia	0.6051	1,615.30

### Interest Rates

Country	3 mth	chg	1 yr	chg	2 yr	chg	5 yr	chg	10 yr	chg
Australia	4.81	-0.01	4.74	-0.01	4.68	-0.01	5.50	-0.02	5.21	-0.01
Canada	4.81	-0.01	4.74	-0.01	4.68	-0.01	5.50	-0.02	5.21	-0.01
Denmark	4.81	-0.01	4.74	-0.01	4.68	-0.01	5.50	-0.02	5.21	-0.01
Finland	4.81	-0.01	4.74	-0.01	4.68	-0.01	5.50	-0.02	5.21	-0.01
France	0.00	0.00	3.71	0.00	3.65	0.00	4.45	-0.02	4.16	-0.01
Germany	0.00	0.00	3.71	0.00	3.65	0.00	4.45	-0.02	4.16	-0.01
Iceland	4.81	-0.01	4.74	-0.01	4.68	-0.01	5.50	-0.02	5.21	-0.01
Ireland	4.81	-0.01	4.74	-0.01	4.68	-0.01	5.50	-0.02	5.21	-0.01
Italy	4.81	-0.01	4.74	-0.01</td						

# O'Sullivan keen to prove he has turned new leaf

A SMALL boy was hanging round the entrance to the players' area at the Plymouth Pavilions. For a good hour he stood there, watching wide eyed as snooker names came past, waiting for one person. "Excuse me, mister, is Ronnie in there? I've been waiting ages to get his picture."

Some players would prefer the peace of their peers, avoiding facing what can be an endless demand for photographs and autographs, but Ronnie O'Sullivan went when he was asked. "Not too many of them, is there? Right."

It was difficult, then, to equate that obliging, kindly image with the lycra whose temper had a fuse so short it barely rose above the level of the gunpowder. But the young man so confused by the trappings and expectations of his game that he was ready to burst has changed.

Or, at least, he says he has. It is frequently dangerous to take what O'Sullivan utters at face value, because his mouth sometimes engages quicker than his brain. There have been occasions when he has openly contemplated retirement, or

Two years after his darkest hour, snooker's reformed bad boy is back in business. Guy Hodgson talked to him.

belittled opponents, things the 22-year-old has regretted. He maintains he is different, however, and his frame endorses that.

Eighteen months ago he was a ballooning 15 stone, now he is three stone lighter and his face could be confused with that of an athlete. He runs, he fishes, he works out in a gym all soothsaying activities at odds with a tempestuous past. "I'm giving myself a fresh start."

He needed to. Next week O'Sullivan returns to the Embassy World Snooker Championship, the event where two years ago his descent from a prodigal to a rebel without a pause reached its nadir. Saul might hold the record for the most spectacular conversion but Rocket Ronnie's thumping of a press officer at The Crucible, for which he was fined £20,000, comes a close second.

Even his mother, Maria, got fed up with him, returning from prison for VAT offences to throw him out of the family home. "She knew I'd be back within a week because I couldn't hack it," he said. "I apologised, said there'd be a new me and she told me: 'Never mind saying it, do it'."

That was when the penny dropped. "I studied myself and didn't like what I saw, the way I looked or anything. I said to myself: 'You've got tons of ability and it's not really worth it throwing it all away. Just give yourself a chance'."

His road to Damascus was any road or path as long as he could run along it. Eight to nine miles every day, punishing his body for giving it grievous harm in the past. Even in the season he works out regularly, which is some departure for a player who appeared to be following the Jimmy White hedonistic route to success rather than Stephen Hendry's.

"I still enjoy myself," he said. "I go out with my mates now and then and have a good drink and all that but snooker is the important thing right now. I've got to train. I'm 22 and if I'm lucky I've got 10 to 15 years in the game and the only way I'll see it through is if I work at it."

"I'm not like Steve Davis, totally dedicated. I'm easily led. So I have to make up for it by keeping myself in reasonable shape so that when I do pick up the cue I'm half on the boil. If I do have a night out, it's easy to recover from it. I'm training to keep myself ticking over."

This mind set is seemingly reinforced by his switching to Ian Doyle, Hendry's manager, from Barry Hearn. Doyle is not noted for welcoming slackers—his tirade against Ken Doherty, which spurred the Irishman to the world title last year, has

become part of championship's folklore—and their collaboration had the words chalk and cheese springing to mind. Appearances were deceptive.

"I've always wanted to join Ian," O'Sullivan said. "When I was 17, and I'd just won the UK championship, deep down I knew where I wanted to be but there was a bit of loyalty to Barry. I signed for another three years but as soon as they were up I decided to leave. It's the best decision I've made."

"Ian doesn't make me work harder, he just gives me words of encouragement at tournaments. He phones me up: 'How do you feel, can I help?' He's

O'Sullivan: "I'm giving myself a fresh start"

working hard for me. You want to pay him back."

The best way would be to win the world championship that has resided within the Doyle stable since 1992 and which has yet to witness the best of O'Sullivan, whose most notable performance was a semi-final two years ago. He has the talent, not even Hendry would dispute that, but whether he has the application is the question.

Snooker is an easy game mostly for O'Sullivan, who made his first century break at 10 and his first competitive maximum 147 five years later. He is a genius but not always one who has been able to grind

out results when the force is not there. This year he has also been handicapped with a draw that could mean he faces Hendry, John Higgins and Doherty.

"I'm not going to put myself under pressure to win the world championship this time," he said. "I'm just 22, there'll be other opportunities. I'm just excited to be there. For the last few weeks all I've been thinking about is Sheffield. The buzz, the atmosphere."

"Nothing surprises me any more. I just want to keep winning and winning. One tournament is not enough for me."

A world championship would do for now, though.

Photograph: Robert Halam

## Fred Davis dies at 84

FRED DAVIS, who won the world title eight times between 1948 and 1956, has died at the age of 84. Davis died in his sleep on Wednesday night at home in Denbigh, north Wales.

Although sometimes overshadowed by his brother Joe, a world champion eight times from 1948, Davis also captured the world billiards championship twice, in 1948 and 1960, the second time at the age of 67.

Yesterday one of Davis' rivals, John Pulman, described him as "the greatest match-player ever". Pulman held the world title between 1964 and 1968 when it was contested on a challenge basis, and remembers Davis as the toughest competitor he had to face.

## On stream for a fast and furious ride



Grant Dalton, skipper of Merit Cup, seeks nature's help on the sprint to Baltimore in the seventh leg of the Whitbread Race

THE warm water current that is the Gulf Stream, although those who live in Britain's north-eastern end of it may have lost some faith in it recently, will be the deciding factor in the seventh leg of the Whitbread race from Fort Lauderdale to Baltimore. It will be a close-fought battle all the way.

It starts off Florida on Sunday and runs north up the eastern seaboard of the United States and is a kind of moving walkway which can give up to three knots of free ride, sometimes even four.

These days there is a lot of information to be gathered from satellites. The spies in the sky can monitor the course of the stream as it meanders north and then

east. They can measure the surface temperature, which is the best indication of where it is running, even though a wind-driven covering of surface water can obscure it and clouds can hamper measurement. They can also measure the hump it makes as there is a slight difference between the height of the moving band of water and the slower track either side of it.

What we don't want is a northerly breeze pushing in the opposite direction, ruffling everything up. A strong northerly can make things really ugly. We would prefer a run and so far most of the forecasts predict a south-easterly, but we will take what we are given. The leg should take about

the same time as a Fastnet, say three to three and a half days, so the short-course sailing will mean very little sleep for anyone. We are even modifying the food preparation so that nearly everything can be eaten on deck, keeping the weight where we want it, movement to the minimum, optimum boat trim to the maximum.

Fortunately, the boys are well rested after what has been a relatively gentle stopover in Florida. There has been no need to gear up the fitness programme, and they are ready to play it flat out and fast from beginning to end.

No one knows how tricky

the last 120 miles up the Chesapeake Bay is going to be. Like

most of the syndicates, we sent our navigator, Mike Quilter, up there for a few days to do some extra research.

If there is a steady reaching breeze, it will be very straightforward. But it is a piece of water with some of its own peculiarities. Not least, the channel can be quite narrow, so trying to overtake people can be difficult. There is some tide, say half to three quarters of a knot, and you have to watch for the currents and eddies caused by the rivers feeding into the bay.

You also have to watch for the crab pots, for which Maryland is so famous; for the electronic warfare games played by the US Navy, which can send all our instruments and satel-

lite positioning systems haywire; for a similar phenomenon caused by a huge steel plant close to Baltimore, and even for the US Seals, their equivalent of the SAS and SBS combined, using unsuspecting yachts as stealth attack targets.

We know a big welcome awaits us in Baltimore, and we may be hosting Prince Albert from our home port of Monaco. We also know there are probably just 40 days sailing left in this Whitbread and we want to be able to look at ourselves in the mirror and say we gave everything we could. We don't just want our second place overall back. Our personal self-respect is as important as the glory.

England's World Cup drill

## RFU turns its back on student game

### Rugby Union

By Chris Hewett

THOMAS CASTAIGNEDE,

the audacious architect of a glorious French Grand Slam, believes his country's domination of European rugby to be the direct result of a team spirit forged in the fires of the last two Student World Cups. What is good enough for the *Tricolores* is not necessarily good enough for England, however: much to the astonishment of some council members, the Rugby Football Union's national playing committee wants to turn its back on the next student tournament in two years' time.

The committee is recommending that England should not field a side in the 2000 competition, a move that threatens to wreck moves by the British Universities Sports Association to host the event. If the BUSA fails to secure the backing of the RFU, the chances of a successful bid are remote indeed.

There is now considerable concern in some sectors of the international rugby community at England's dismissive attitude towards tournaments below senior level; alarmingly, no English side participated in the recent Under-19 World Cup, which was held in France and won in remarkable fashion by the Irish.

Even though the Student World Cup is not an official International Board tournament, there have been three successful events since 1988 and most major Test-playing nations now regard it as a fixture in the calendar.

A third of the French Grand Slam team were part of the winning 1996 side—indeed, Raphael Ibanez, the national captain, led that team—and five others played in the 1992 tournament in Italy," said Bob Reeves, an RFU council member and one of the central figures in England's student rugby movement. "I recently spent several hours with Pierre Villepreux, the French coach, who stressed the importance of the student game in pro-

ducing young, intelligent, open-minded players who had not yet been conditioned by the peculiar demands of club rugby.

Kieran Bracken, Will Greenwood and Tony Dipprose are all products of student rugby and even in the last World Cup, when the England team was denuded of 20 first choice players, both David Rees and Danny Carewcock emerged, having been virtually unknown beforehand. Yet we have now reached the stage where the national playing committee is questioning the student game's place in the grand order of things. Villepreux, on the other hand, sees it as a significant element in his development programme.

"We are in danger of missing the whole point of the student sector and, if we dismiss it, we will do so at our at our peril. Student rugby traditionally encourages speed and risk-taking, while the senior game is still based on no-risk ball-retention. When France beat England in Paris in February, their whole philosophy was based on the freedom of expression common to the student game."

Reeves is pressing the RFU's management board to overturn the national playing committee's recommendation, but the debate has been delayed by the political conflagration surrounding Cliff Brittle's omission from the union's peace talks with the Premiership clubs and Fran Cotton's subsequent resignation as RFU vice-chairman. The internal squabbling took a fresh turn yesterday when Brittle and Cotton were denied the use of Twickenham facilities for a protest meeting with grass-roots club activists planned for this Sunday.

Senior RFU figures also wrote to those clubs planning to attend any forthcoming Brittle-Cotton meeting, underlining that they would do so without the support of the union. The RFU wants its disaffected officers to apply the proverbial sock to the relevant orifice until the completion of the current round of peace negotiations.

## Protest at Scots' withdrawals

THE Australian Rugby Union yesterday resumed its role as the self-appointed guardian of the world game by lecturing its counterpart in Scotland on the rights and wrongs of team selection, for this summer's two-Test series against the Wallabies, writes Chris Hewett.

John O'Neill, the managing director of the ARU, gave the Scots a verbal dressing-down over their decision to leave half a dozen first-choice players, including Gary Armstrong, Alan Tait and Doodie Weir, at home to recharge their batteries.

"We will be asking the Scots to confirm that the side they send here is the best available," said O'Neill, clearly suspicious that

English clubs had pulled contractual rank on key personnel. "The prospect of facing such a weakened Scottish team is very disappointing and, if they have so many players unavailable, you have to ask whether it is worth their while coming."

Jim Telfer, the Scottish coach, dismissed O'Neill's veiled allegations, insisting that a number of non-travellers were suffering from injuries while both Armstrong, the captain, and Tait were in need of a rest. "We have a World Cup to think about next year and both Gary and Alan are at an age at which they must tend their physical resources carefully if they want to make it to the tournament," he said.

## England's World Cup drill

### Hockey

By Bill Colwill

ENGLAND have their first outing this afternoon since their Australian coach, Barry Dancer, announced his squad for the World Cup, when they play Wales in a Four Nations tournament at the new Southgate Hockey Centre at Trent Park, Scotland play France in the second fixture.

Dancer was yesterday concentrating on penalty-corner drills as the team practised at Southgate. He was able to confirm that Jon Wyatt and Jason

Lee had both recovered from injury. Strongly featured in the practice was the specialist corner striker, Calum Giles, who has been recalled for the World Cup.

The coach will be using the weekend and next weekend's trip to Milton Keynes to decide on the second goalkeeping slot behind Simon Mason. David Luckes, a 23-year-old Olympian, and Caenock's 23-year-old Jimi Lewis are vying for the position.

David Buryan, Wales' new coach, has relied on an experienced squad for his first tournament as he begins his build-up to September's Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur.

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County cricket 1998: Championship will once again struggle to emerge from twilight zone. Jon Culley reports

## New season is constricted by archaic values

AFTER the latest extinguishing of hopes abroad, English cricket more than ever needs the tonic of a vibrant, well-structured and meaningful domestic season to restore faith in the game at home. What would be better now than to embark upon a competitive, high-profile season of championship and knockout matches carefully planned to sharpen appetites, hone skills and bring top players to peak form ready for a new challenge in the international arena?

Dream on. In case it had escaped your attention, the 1998 English cricket season is, in fact, already under way, launched as ever by a couple of meaningless friendly matches — still described as first-class — between sub-standard university teams clinging desperately to a faded past and below-strength counties sides still coated in winter rust.

The championship begins today, although those who are not looking for it will probably not notice. No television chan-

nel, not even among four dedi-

cated exclusively to sport, will mention it in except in passing.

Matches will be reported in to-

morrow's newspapers, although not, for the most part, on the back pages. At the grounds, players will emerge at 11 o'clock to polite applause from fewer spectators than would attend a poorly-supported car boot sale.

It is upon these archaic foun-

dations, preserved in the sacred

interests of a each county's few

thousand members, that Little

England still thinks it can build

a Test team capable of achieving

success against opponents who

now defeat our best 11 almost

most routinely. The wind of rev-

olution whipped up by radicals

has been successfully diverted.

Some change is in the offing —

a two division Sunday League,

for what is worth, begins

next year — but the major re-

structuring necessary to raise

standards generally has been re-

sisted, thrown out by the parochial

interests whom the

game's cobwebbed constitution

still allows to determine its fu-

ture.

In the circumstances, the

enthusiasm of the players con-

tinues to astonish, although the

growing number of Test players

permitted to sit out some count-

y matches suggests their com-

mitment is beginning to wane.

Significantly, the championship

has tended recently to be won

by counties with few England

players, which perhaps says

much about where priorities

now lie.

At least there has been an in-

crease in prize money — up

£30,000 to £100,000 for the

winners of the Britannia As-

surance pennant, which sounds

quite a lot before it is divided up

— to tickle up the incentives, al-

though one cannot imagine fi-

ancial motives alone will drive

Glamorgan, Leicestershire and

Warwickshire to build on recent

succes.

More the hunger that other,

more decorated players perhaps

lack for the bread and butter

of the game — the hunger

that spurred Glamorgan last

year to their first title for 28

years and, in 1996, Leicestershire

to their first for 21.

The Welshmen may find it

hard to retain the prize. Hugh

Morris, their most prolific bat,

has retired and Duncan Fletcher,

last year's successful coach,

has returned to Zimbabwe.

Matthew Maynard has proved

an inspirational and astute cap-

tain, but his success would be to

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# Captain Cork senses fresh start

Jon Culley talks to a new leader whose problems appear to be in the past

AT the height of the turmoil that engulfed Derbyshire cricket last mid-summer, the sight of Dominic Cork's name added to the roll of captains displayed in the County Ground pavilion might have been dismissed as a work of mischief perpetrated by someone with an inane sense of humour.

Already regarded as something of a hothead, Cork had been a central character in the dressing-room revolt that led the former captain, Dean Jones to resign in high dudgeon in June. Hardly the ideal figure, it would seem to restore peace and tranquillity.

Yet as Derbyshire seek to put a troubled episode behind them, the fresh lettering on the polished wood does indeed spell out 'D Cork', his installation as captain one of five new appointments made during a winter of sweeping change.

No one regards it as a joke, especially the 26-year-old Cork himself. 'When I was offered the job it took me a second to say "yes"', he said.

'I've always had an ambition to be captain one day. It's not something I broadcasted, but people here were aware of it.'

'I have plenty of ideas and I feel I've gained a lot of knowledge in a relatively short England Test space of time. You don't play under someone like Kim Barnett without learning a few things.'

But what about that volatile behaviour, those near-demonic appeals, the eye-balling of opponents and the all-too-conspicuous disappointment when things have not gone his way?

'Myself, I've never felt there was a lot wrong,' he said. 'Perhaps I have been guilty of going over the top a bit but I'm a person who wants to win. It is part of my competitive nature. If I appeal strongly it's because I strongly believe the batsman is out.'

'But, having said that, I have become a more mature person. I've realised things are not always going to work out exactly as I want them and that aggression has to be channelled in the right directions.'

Maturity has been shaped by several factors, from injuries and loss of form to the domestic problems that compelled him to quit England's tour of Zimbabwe the winter before last.

All conspired to create a miserable passage under which he hopes a line has been drawn. The hip and groin problems that wrecked last season - and fuelled his conflict with a sceptical Jones - have been overcome and a winter spent in Derbyshire's commercial office has provided

time for reflection as well as recovery.

'I feel comfortable about everything now, on and off the field,' he said. 'The batteries had been touching empty but they are fully recharged and I'm raring to go. It was frustrating to be watching England on TV rather than being with them but Lord MacLaurin and David Graveney came to see me and were encouraging.'

The visit of the English Cricket Board chairman and the chairman of selectors followed Cork's omission from the England line-up, not just for this winter's tour but for the whole of last summer, before which he was told he should work on temperament as well as form. 'I think they are pleased I have been made captain here,' he said. 'I appreciated their visit and I feel very positive about the future. I know that if I do well I will put myself back in contention.'

He denies there was ever a possibility of his leaving Derbyshire, as Chris Adams and Devon Malcolm did. The captaincy, he says, was not a carrot.

'I never thought about going. I lost a bit of love for the club last summer but this has always been my county. For me, loyalty is a big part of county cricket and it was Derbyshire who gave me the opportunity to play.'

Cork's team is reinforced by the arrival of the Australian batsman Michael Slater but, with Adams gone to Sussex and Malcolm to Northamptonshire, two key members of the side that came second in the Britannia Assurance table two years ago have been lost. Cork, however, dismisses the notion that Derbyshire will be poorer for their passing. Indeed, a look that almost says "good riddance" betrays his thoughts.

'I don't think losing those players will be that damaging,' he said. 'What we will have is 11 players who are fully committed and together. There will not be any individuals.'

Team spirit, he says, will come from close bonding. 'There will be no first and second teams, just a squad. I want everyone, from the youngest to the most senior players, to see himself as a player-coach, able to take advice and give it. And they will find me an open captain.'

Throughout Cork's conversation, one phrase recurs: fresh start, new beginning. With a new chairman (Vic Brownell), director of cricket (Andy Hayhurst), secretary (John Smedley) and commercial manager (Keith Stevenson) in addition to a new captain, Derbyshire could adopt it as a party slogan. From Cork's lips, it sounds more like a personal mantra.

## Lara touches down to lead weakened Warwickshire

BRIAN LARA made a dash from Heathrow Airport yesterday morning to join an injury-hit Warwickshire for their County Championship opener against Durham, which starts at Edgbaston today.

The opening batsman Andy Moles is ruled out with an Achilles tendon injury, and the former captain, Tim Munton, is likely to delay his return after last year's back surgery.

The England A spinner Ashley Giles has an injection in his left heel last week, and fitness checks are scheduled for the wicketkeeper, Keith Piper (neck), and seamer Graeme Welch (broken finger).

Neil Smith or Dominic Osterfeld open with England's Nick Knight, and the former Sussex seamer Ed Grifffins will make his debut after serving a 19-month ban for a drugs offence.

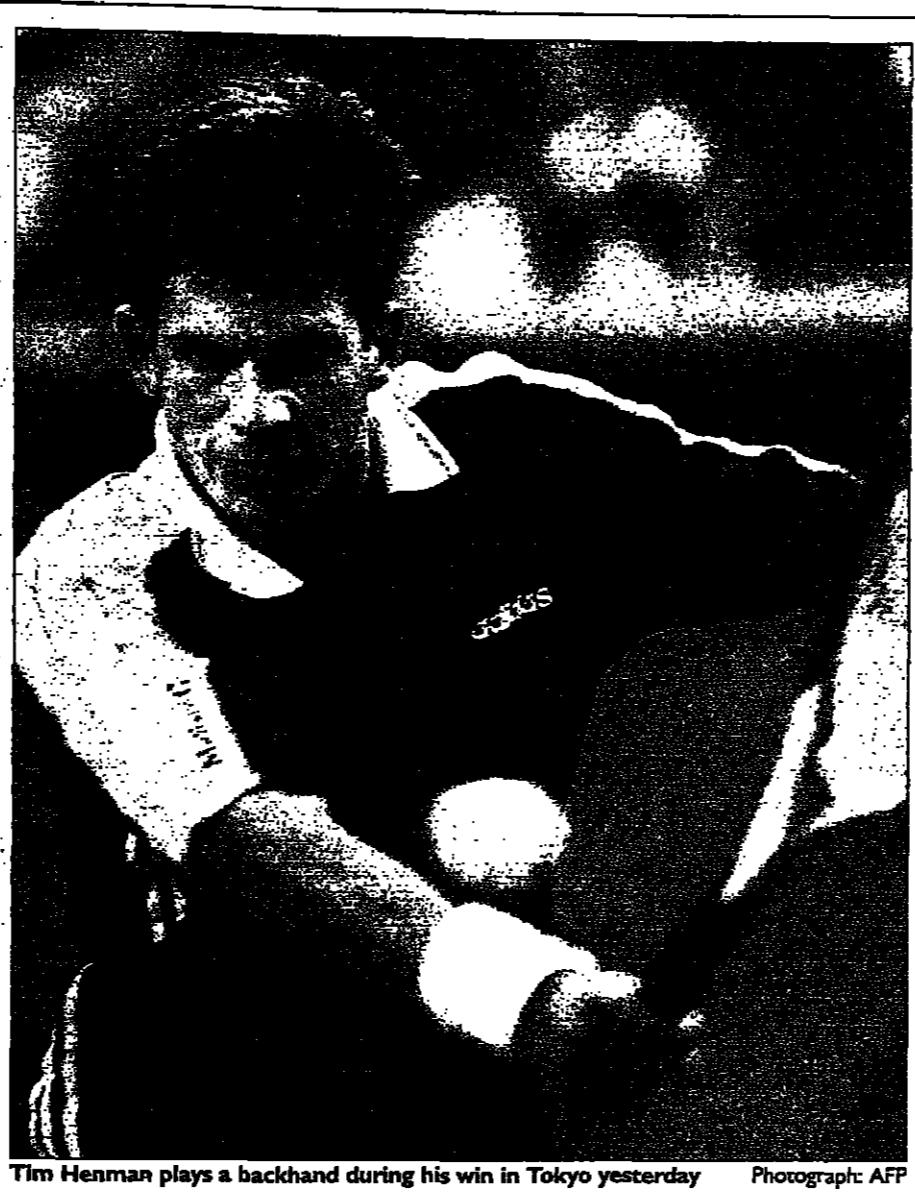
Mike Atherton will open

the batting for Lancashire against Sussex in Hove, despite being offered a rest after the West Indies tour.

Atherton, back from the West Indies tour for less than two weeks, wants to make an immediate bid to retain his England place after stepping down as captain.

Sussex will be without their new overseas player, Michael Bevan, as the 27-year-old Australian all-rounder is involved in the one-day international series against India. Wasim Khan, recruited from Warwickshire, opens the Sussex batting with Toby Pearce. The new captain, Chris Adams, comes in at three.

Glamorgan, are set to give Simon Jones the chance to follow in the footsteps of his father, the former England bowler Jeff Jones, by naming the 19-year-old in their 13-man squad against Gloucestershire at Bristol.



Tim Henman plays a backhand during his win in Tokyo yesterday. Photograph: AFP

## Henman has sweet revenge

### Tennis

TIM HENMAN gained revenge over Jerome Goldsmith yesterday to enhance his hopes of winning the Japan Open in Tokyo.

The British No 2 suffered a first-round exit at the hands of the Frenchman in the Australian Open in January, but he needed just one hour to set the record straight, with a 6-4, 6-1 win at the Ariake Coliseum.

Henman, recalling his Australian Open defeat, said: 'It

was a very disappointing result. I didn't have a game plan and I let him dictate too much. But today was a different story. I didn't give him too many opportunities to get into long rallies or start to move me round.'

Both players had no break chance until the score went to 4-3, 30-40 on Goldsmith's serve, which Henman converted to take the set.

A spirited Henman chalked up a 5-0 lead in the second set, saving the only break point against him throughout the

match at 30-40 in the third game.

Henman, who at No 15 is the highest-ranked player left in the field, now meets the American Jan-Michael Gambill, who beat Rainer Schüttler of Germany, in today's quarter-finals.

The top seed, Patrick Rafter, was knocked out on Wednesday, and Michael Chang became the latest big-name casualty yesterday when he went down 2-6, 7-5, 4-6 to the 113th-ranked German, Hendrik Dreekmann.

## Players' union fears for clubs

### Football

By Andrew Martin

PREMiership clubs may go out of business if football's spiralling wage bills continue to soar unchecked, Gordon Taylor, the Professional Footballers' Association chief executive, warned yesterday.

Taylor expressed his fears following Wednesday's revelations, by the accountants Deloitte and Touche, of a 35 per cent hike in salaries among those playing in the élite division in the past season alone, while Premiership clubs continue to struggle to break even.

Only two Premiership clubs, Manchester United and Liverpool, have managed to make significant profits in the past season, and Blackburn, Coventry and the relegated Nottingham Forest actually lost money

- in direct contrast to the salaries being earned by their employees. The basic salary of an average Premiership player is now between £15,000 and £20,000.

Taylor said: 'You wonder how long it can go on. What comes up must come down, so I do not see how it can go on.'

The secret is to be the exception against the other clubs, and the two exceptions

stand out are Manchester United and Wimbledon in that they have managed to put together a team whose performance has been better than what it should have been worth in the market.'

However, Brendon Batson, also of the PFA, insisted players' wages are justified. 'The huge television deals, amounting to £740m over four years, are due to the popularity of the game - and that is down to the players,' he argued.

His views were at odds with football's first big wage earner, George Best. The former Manchester United winger said: 'There is too much money in the game and we have seen it go out of control. You have all these youngsters being paid huge amounts of money, before they have really earned it.'

The former Preston and England player, Sir Tom Finney, refused to condemn players for taking as much money as they could from the game. 'I've always said that an employer pays you what he thinks you're worth. Who can blame players if they are offered £15,000 or £20,000 per week?' said Sir Tom, who earned £20 a week on his retirement in 1960, the year the maximum wage was scrapped.

## Halifax prepare to start the party

### Non-League notebook

By Rupert Mercall

THE long wait is almost over for Halifax Town. Victory for the runaway GM Vauxhall Conference leaders at Kidderminster Harriers tomorrow will seal the title and ensure that the West Yorkshire side replace Doncaster Rovers in the Nationwide Football League next season.

Lincoln City, Darlington and Colchester United all made it back in to the League within a year or two being relegated, but Halifax have been in the Conference for five seasons. Their transformation from struggling to a side 14 points clear at the top has been remarkable - last year they were in danger of relegation to the UniBond League until the last day of the season.

Halifax set up tomorrow's possible party with a thrilling 4-3 win over Southport at The Shay on Easter Monday. Despite being down to 10 men following the dismissal of their player-coach, Kieran O'Regan, they came from behind with two goals in the last eight minutes from Dave Hanson.

The top two in the UniBond League meet on Tuesday at Holker Street, where Barrow's encounter with Boston United, who are four points clear with a game in hand. Victory for the visitors will mean that Geoff Chapple's side will have only one realistic rival for the title: third-placed Boreham Wood, who are 10 points adrift with three games in hand.

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The top two in the UniBond League meet on Tuesday at Holker Street, where Barrow's encounter with Boston United, who are four points clear with a game in hand. Victory for the visitors will mean that Geoff Chapple's side will have only one

# Ginola feels World Cup frustration

## Football

DAVID GINOLA believes Tottenham's relegation battle has ruined his chances of playing in this summer's World Cup finals.

The former Newcastle midfielder has been in excellent form since his move to White Hart Lane at the start of the season and the Spurs manager, Christian Gross, even telephoned France's coach, Aimé Jacquet, to sing the praises of the winger, who is the club's leading scorer. However, Ginola was yesterday left out of Jacquet's latest squad for a friendly match against Sweden in Stockholm on 22 April.

With time running out before the finals start in June in his home country, Ginola fears Spurs' plight has given Jacquet the wrong impression about his form.

"It's difficult for the manager because he knows Spurs are in a relegation position," Ginola said. "If we were in the top five he would be more interested by me but at the moment we are in a relegation position, and he thinks I am struggling like the team."

"If you don't come to look at games and just see the results, they lost, won or drew, and there is nothing on TV about how I was fantastic, you must think I am not playing well."

Ginola was blamed by many critics after his mistake in the final qualifying game for USA 94 contributed to France missing out on what looked a certain place in the finals. But the

31-year-old believes it is time that he was given another chance and still holds out a faint hope that Jacquet may give him the opportunity to redeem himself.

"There is always a chance, and I hope I will be in the next game. We have four games to go with Tottenham, and if we can get some good results I think he has to call me just to try. It's not an important game, just friendlies. Maybe he will think: 'It will be good to try David because he can help us in different ways. Just by being in the squad of 22 with his personality he can help us'.

What he has to see is that I'm not coming into the squad to destroy everything."

The Premiership will be represented in Jacquet's squad by Arsenal's Patrick Vieira and Nicolas Anelka, who have been rewarded for their exceptional form in the Gunners' charge towards a League and Cup double. Jacquet has also recalled Bernard Lama, the West Ham goalkeeper, but he has overlooked the Chelsea defender Franck Leboeuf for the friendly.

Lama, who also missed a year of international duty after a ban for smoking cannabis, is set to start the match after being named as one of only two goalkeepers.

Chris Armstrong, Ginola's Tottenham team-mate, insisted today that any rift between him and the Spurs coach, Christian Gross, had been healed. The Spurs striker clashed with his manager after being substituted

against Coventry on Monday.

and Darren Anderton and David Howells have also made public their unhappiness with things at White Hart Lane.

Spurs travel to Barnsley on Saturday for a game that is vital for both team in the fight for survival, and Armstrong dismissed suggestions of a mutiny in the camp.

"There is no problem with the players and the manager," he said. "I was disappointed about getting substituted in the last couple of games - I think any player is going to be disappointed about being brought off. There is no problem now, it is all about sticking together. As long as Tottenham are in the Premier League that is all that matters."

"There are a lot of fit players in the squad now and that is always going to cause problems. Everyone is getting back fit so there is always going to be someone unhappy, but it is good for the club and that is the most important thing."

Gross refused to disclose whether he had fined Armstrong for his outburst, but he said he could see why the player was upset.

"I understand if players are not happy or satisfied when I take them off," Gross said. "I wasn't satisfied with Chris Armstrong's performance against Coventry and that is why I took him off."

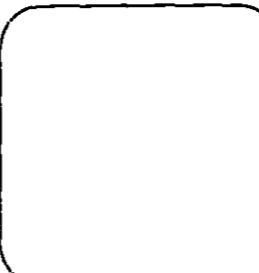
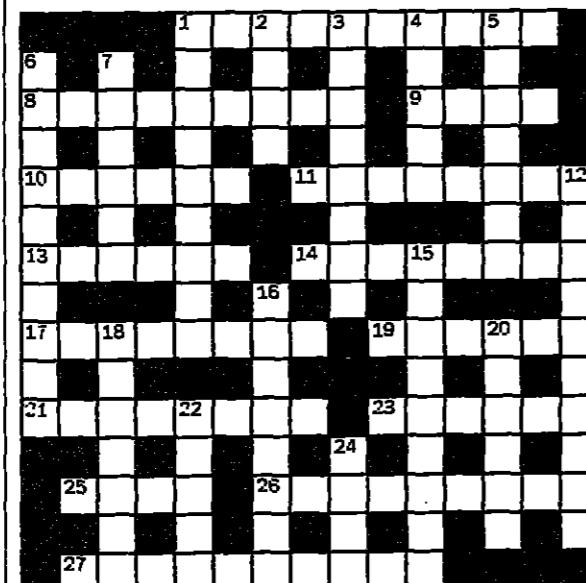
"He is very ambitious and I like to have ambitious players who want to play. But I have sat down and spoken with Chris and he must understand that all the players here must follow the rules."

## THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 3587, Friday 17 April

By Phi

Thursday's solution



### ACROSS

- 1 Stop orbiting body getting round with the others (4,3,4)
- 8 One acting disturbed at reading (9)
- 9 Attitude taken by lecturer in study? (4)
- 10 Suggest concern should have point? (6)
- 11 Modern college affected by drugs? (4,4)
- 13 Stalwart to try and try again? Not right (6)
- 14 Grounded in accident? Little was expected of him (8)
- 17 Uncommon fellow, an artist, one brought in to enrapture, mostly (4,4)
- 19 Protection afforded by a yard in insalubrious area (6)
- 21 Where academics may dispute better collection of data (3,5)
- 23 Information about boy brought back from Scandinavian country (6)
- 25 Victim of pellet or bullet (4)
- 26 TV detective caught with poem in cryptic writing? (5,4)
- 27 Put fish in a depth of water with the minimum of effort - and it will do this! (4,2)
- 28 DOWN
- 1 Caesar involved with plot to do away with second Egyptian ruler (9)
- 2 Machine-gunner's first intent - to cripple (4)
- 3 More than one stress is lifted when indulging in joints (8)
- 4 Chap seen in river (sacred river) (5)
- 5 Wage? Outlay involves it on reflection? (7)
- 6 Be decisive and put in a damp-course (4,5,3)
- 7 Oriental building is past housing an idol (6)
- 12 Purely interested in mountaineering? (4-6)
- 15 The Spanish stitch here? Not here (9)
- 16 I'm a bolt sent abroad, without power? (8)
- 18 Most of red beans may make you sicken (7)
- 20 What one calls judge down in Shropshire town (6)
- 22 A new set provided by the astical backer (5)
- 24 Book on South American city shows verve (4)

Zimbabwe's Nick Price, the defending champion, hits out of a bunker to the 12th green during yesterday's first round of the MCI Classic in Hilton Head, South Carolina. Photograph: John Kuntz/Reuters

## Ferguson finds himself new Star

FROM Alex Ferguson's point of view, racehorses have several advantages over professional footballers. They do not employ agents, they do not go clubbing the night before a big race, and they do not date Spice Girls. Best of all, when your horse goes to the races, the serious pressure is someone else's problem.

Such were the pleasures for the Manchester United manager yesterday as he visited Newmarket to watch Queensland Star, the first horse to carry his suitably red colours, contest the Stunney Maiden Stakes. If he had hoped for a little anonymity, however, he was in the wrong place.

At 10.45 on a damp Newmarket morning, the winning post at the bottom of the Rowley Mile was swarming with reporters and cameras as Ferguson posed with Queensland Star and Candle Riggs, another two-year-old, for the benefit of the bookmaker who will sponsor his racing silks. Both horses were named with

commendable sentiment.

Queensland Star was a ship which Ferguson's father helped to build at the Govan shipyards 40 years ago, while Candle Riggs is a street in his native Glasgow.

"Everyone gets to a point in life where you have to have other interests and you think about restructuring your life in terms of what you are going to do when you retire," Ferguson said. "If you want to stay in football you have to find a way of surviving the pressure, and the last couple of years have rekindled an interest in racing which I had when I was a player. I enjoy the fresh air, it's good therapy for me."

Better still for the manager's

winning a football match. Ferguson said, "One is my job and this is my hobby, but it was very exciting. If my team shows as much determination, then we'll get there."

Racing is eager to attract new owners at the best of times, and those with a public profile as high as Ferguson's are doubly welcome. He was surrounded by autograph hunters of all ages from the moment he appeared in the paddock, and it was not merely Manchester United fans who were delighted to see his horse come home in front. It is as well that any new owner experiences the delights of the turf before coming face-to-face with its frustrations.

John McCririck, a Newcastle fan, put it to the filly's owner afterwards that this might be the only prize Ferguson will win this spring. For all the obvious delight on the Scotsman's face, however, he was sensible enough to do so from a safe distance.

"You can't compare this to



Alex Ferguson at Newmarket yesterday, when he was a winner. Photograph: Peter Jay

finest cats but fails to appear at the track (rather like a certain football manager, in fact, when the England squad is announced). And if Queensland Star is ever unlucky enough to feature in a stewards' inquiry, the racecourse officials may not be as accommodating as the Old Trafford referee who awarded a penalty whenever David Beckham bends down to tie his bootlace in the opposition half.

Racing, page 25

Advertisement



... Make the Break